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ESSAYS

AND

TREATISES

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

By DAVID HUME, Esq:

VOL. I.

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ESSAYS

ESSAYS,

MORAL, POLITICAL, AND LITERARY.

PART I[1].

ESSAY I.

OF THE DELICACY OF TASTE AND PASSION.

SOME people are ſubject to a certain *delicacy* of *paſſion*, which makes them extremely ſenſible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every proſperous event, as well as a piercing grief when they meet with misfortunes and adverſity. Favors and good offices eaſily engage their friendſhip; while the ſmalleſt injury provokes their reſentment. Any honor or mark of diſtinction elevates them above meaſure; but they are as ſenſibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no doubt, more lively enjoyments, as well as more pungent ſorrows, than men of cool and ſedate tempers: But, I believe, when every thing is balanced, there is no one who would not rather be of the latter character, were he entirely maſter of his own diſpoſition.

[1] PUBLISHED in 1742.

Good or ill fortune is very little at our diſpoſal: And when a perſon, that has this ſenſibility of temper, meets with any misfortune, his ſorrow or reſentment takes entire poſſeſſion of him, and deprives him of all reliſh in the common occurrences of life; the right enjoyment of which forms the chief part of our happineſs. Great pleaſures are much leſs frequent than great pains; ſo that a ſenſible temper muſt meet with fewer trials in the former way than in the latter. Not to mention, that men of ſuch lively paſſions are apt to be tranſported beyond all bounds of prudence and diſcretion, and to take falſe ſteps in the conduct of life, which are often irretrievable.

There is a *delicacy* of *taſte* obſervable in ſome men, which very much reſembles this *delicacy* of *paſſion*, and produces the ſame ſenſibility to beauty and deformity of every kind, as that does to proſperity and adverſity, obligations and injuries. When you preſent a poem or a picture to a man poſſeſſed of this talent, the delicacy of his feeling makes him be ſenſibly touched with every part of it; nor are the maſterly ſtrokes perceived with more exquiſite reliſh and ſatisfaction, than the negligences or abſurdities with diſguſt and uneaſineſs. A polite and judicious converſation affords him the higheſt entertainment; rudeneſs or impertinence is as great a puniſhment to him. In ſhort, delicacy of taſte has the ſame effect as delicay of paſſion: It enlarges the ſphere both of our happineſs and miſery, and makes us ſenſible to pains as well as pleaſures which eſcape the reſt of mankind.

I believe, however, every one will agree with me, that, notwithſtanding this reſemblance, delicacy of taſte is as much to be deſired and cultivated, as delicacy of paſſion is to be lamented, and to be remedied if poſſible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our diſpoſal; but we are pretty much maſters what books we ſhall read, what diverſions we ſhall partake of, and what company we ſhall keep. Philoſophers have endeavoured to render happineſs entirely independent of every thing external. That degree of perfection is impoſſible to be *attained:* But every wiſe man will endeavour to place his happineſs on ſuch objects chiefly as depend upon himſelf; and that is not to be *attained* ſo much by any other means as by this delicacy of ſentiment. When a man is poſſeſſed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleaſes his taſte than by what gratifies his appetites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reaſoning than the moſt expenſive luxury can afford.

Whatever connexion there may be originally between theſe two ſpecies of delicacy, I am perſuaded, that nothing is ſo proper to cure us of this delicacy of paſſion, as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taſte, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, of compoſitions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts. A greater or leſs reliſh for thoſe obvious beauties which ſtrike the ſenſes, depends entirely upon the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the temper: But with regard to the ſciences and liberal arts,

a fine taſte is, in ſome meaſure, the ſame with ſtrong ſenſe; or at leaſt depends ſo much upon it, that they are inſeparable. In order to judge aright of a compoſition of genius, there are ſo many views to be taken in, ſo many circumſtances to be compared, and ſuch a knowledge of human nature requiſite, that no man, who is not poſſeſſed of the ſoundeſt judgment, will ever make a tolerable critic in ſuch performances. And this is a new reaſon for cultivating a reliſh in the liberal arts. Our judgment will ſtrengthen by this exerciſe: We ſhall form juſter notions of life: Many things, which pleaſe or afflict others, will appear to us too frivolous to engage our attention: And we ſhall loſe by degrees that ſenſibility and delicacy of paſſion which is ſo incommodious.

But perhaps I have gone too far, in ſaying that a cultivated taſte for the polite arts extinguiſhes the paſſions, and renders us indifferent to thoſe objects which are ſo fondly purſued by the reſt of mankind. On farther reflection, I find, that it rather improves our ſenſibility for all the tender and agreeable paſſions; at the ſame time that it renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boiſterous emotions.

Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.

For this, I think, there may be aſſigned two very natural reaſons. In the *firſt* place, nothing is ſo improving to the temper as the ſtudy of the beauties, either of poetry, eloquence, muſic, or

painting. They give a certain elegance of ſentiment to which the reſt of mankind are ſtrangers. The emotions which they excite are ſoft and tender. They draw off the mind from the hurry of buſineſs and intereſt; cheriſh reflection; diſpoſe to tranquillity; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which, of all diſpoſitions of the mind, is the beſt ſuited to love and friendſhip.

In the *ſecond* place, a delicacy of taſte is favorable to love and friendſhip, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and converſation of the greater part of men. You will ſeldom find that mere men of the world, whatever ſtrong ſenſe they may be endowed with, are very nice in diſtinguiſhing characters, or in marking thoſe inſenſible differences and gradations which make one man preferable to another. Any one that has competent ſenſe, is ſufficient for their entertainment: They talk to him of their pleaſure and affairs with the ſame frankneſs that they would to another; and finding many who are fit to ſupply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want in his abſence. But to make uſe of the alluſion of a celebrated French [2] author, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the moſt ordinary machine is ſufficient to tell the hours; but the moſt elaborate alone can point out the minutes and ſeconds, and diſtinguiſh the ſmalleſt differences of time. One that has well digeſted his knowledge both of books

[2] *M.* FONTENELLE, *Pluralité des Mondes*, Soirée 6.

and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few ſelect companions. He feels too ſenſibly, how much all the reſt of mankind fall ſhort of the notions which he has entertained. And, his affections being thus confined within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further than if they were more general and undiſtinguiſhed. The gaiety and frolic of a bottle-companion improves with him into a ſolid friendſhip; and the ardors of a youthful appetite become an elegant paſſion.

ESSAY II.

OF THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

NOTHING is more apt to ſurpriſe a foreigner, than the extreme liberty which we enjoy in this country, of communicating whatever we pleaſe to the public, and of openly cenſuring every meaſure entered into by the king or his miniſters. If the adminiſtration reſolve upon war, it is affirmed, that, either wilfully or ignorantly, they miſtake the intereſts of the nation; and that peace, in the preſent ſituation of affairs, is infinitely preferable. If the paſſion of the miniſters lie towards peace, our political writers breathe nothing but war and devaſtation, and repreſent the pacific conduct of the government as mean and puſillanimous. As this liberty is not indulged in any other government, either republican or monarchical; in Holland and Venice, more than in France or

Spain; it may very naturally give occaſion to a queſtion, *How it happens that Great Britain alone enjoys this peculiar privilege?*

The reaſon why the laws indulge us in ſuch a liberty, ſeems to be derived from our mixed form of government, which is neither wholly monarchical nor wholly republican. It will be found, if I miſtake not, a true obſervation in politics, that the two extremes in government, liberty and ſlavery, commonly approach neareſt to each other; and that, as you depart from the extremes, and mix a little of monarchy with liberty, the government becomes always the more free; and, on the other hand, when you mix a little of liberty with monarchy, the yoke becomes always the more grievous and intolerable. In a government ſuch as that of France, which is abſolute, and where law, cuſtom, and religion concur, all of them, to make the people fully ſatisfied with their condition, the monarch cannot entertain any *jealouſy* againſt his ſubjects, and therefore is apt to indulge them in great *liberties* both of ſpeech and action. In a government altogether republican, ſuch as that of Holland, where there is no magiſtrate ſo eminent as to give *jealouſy* to the ſtate, there is no danger in intruſting the magiſtrates with large diſcretionary powers; and though many advantages reſult from ſuch powers, in preſerving peace and order, yet they lay a conſiderable reſtraint on men's actions, and make every private citizen pay a great reſpect to the government. Thus it ſeems evident, that the two extremes of abſolute mo-

narchy and of a republic, approach near to each other in ſome material circumſtances. In the *firſt*, the magiſtrate has no jealouſy of the people; in the *ſecond*, the people have none of the magiſtrate: Which want of jealouſy begets a mutual confidence and truſt in both caſes; and produces a ſpecies of liberty in monarchies, and of arbitrary power in republics.

To juſtify the other part of the foregoing obſervation, that, in every government, the means are moſt wide of each other, and that the mixtures of monarchy and liberty render the yoke either more eaſy or more grievous; I muſt take notice of a remark in Tacitus with regard to the Romans under the emperors, that they neither could bear total ſlavery nor total liberty; *Nec totam ſervitutem, nec totam libertatem pati poſſunt.* This remark a celebrated poet has tranſlated and applied to the Engliſh, in his lively deſcription of queen Elizabeth's policy and government,

Et fit aimer ſon joug à l'Anglais indompté,
Qui ne peut ni ſervir, ni vivre en liberté.

HENRIADE, *liv.* I.

According to theſe remarks, we are to conſider the Roman government under the emperors as a mixture of deſpotiſm and liberty, where the deſpotiſm prevailed; and the Engliſh government as a mixture of the ſame kind, where the liberty predominates. The conſequences are conformable to the foregoing obſervation; and ſuch as may be expected from thoſe mixed forms of government,

which beget a mutual watchfulneſs and jealouſy. The Roman emperors were, many of them, the moſt frightful tyrants that ever diſgraced human nature; and it is evident, that their cruelty was chiefly excited by their *jealouſy*, and by their obſerving that all the great men of Rome bore with impatience the dominion of a family, which, but a little before, was nowiſe ſuperior to their own. On the other hand, as the republican part of the government prevails in England, though with a great mixture of monarchy, it is obliged, for its own preſervation, to maintain a watchful *jealouſy* over the magiſtrates, to remove all diſcretionary powers, and to ſecure every one's life and fortune by general and inflexible laws. No action muſt be deemed a crime but what the law has plainly determined to be ſuch: No crime muſt be imputed to a man but from a legal proof before his judges; and even theſe judges muſt be his fellow-ſubjects, who are obliged, by their own intereſt, to have a watchful eye over the encroachments and violence of the miniſters. From theſe cauſes it proceeds, that there is as much liberty, and even, perhaps, licentiouſneſs, in Great Britain, as there were formerly ſlavery and tyranny in Rome.

Theſe principles account for the great liberty of the preſs in theſe kingdoms, beyond what is indulged in any other government. It is apprehended, that arbitrary power would ſteal in upon us, were we not careful to prevent its progreſs, and were there not an eaſy method of conveying the alarm from one end of the kingdom to the other. The

ſpirit of the people muſt frequently be rouſed, in order to curb the ambition of the court; and the dread of rouſing this ſpirit muſt be employed to prevent that ambition. Nothing is ſo effectual to this purpoſe as the liberty of the preſs; by which all the learning, wit, and genius of the nation, may be employed on the ſide of freedom, and every one be animated to its defence. As long, therefore, as the republican part of our government can maintain itſelf againſt the monarchical, it will naturally be careful to keep the preſs open, as of importance to its own preſervation.

It muſt however be allowed, that the unbounded liberty of the preſs, though it be difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to propoſe a ſuitable remedy for it, is one of the evils attending thoſe mixed forms of government.

ESSAY III.

THAT POLITICS MAY BE REDUCED TO A SCIENCE.

IT is a queſtion with ſeveral, Whether there be any eſſential difference between one form of government and another? and, Whether every form may not become good or bad, according as it is well or ill adminiſtered [1]? Were it once admitted,

[1] *For forms of government let fools conteſt,*
Whate'er is beſt adminiſter'd is beſt.
ESSAY on Man, Epiſt. 3.

that all governments are alike, and that the only difference conſiſts in the character and conduct of the governors, moſt political diſputes would be at an end, and all *Zeal* for one conſtitution above another muſt be eſteemed mere bigotry and folly. But, though a friend to moderation, I cannot forbear condemning this ſentiment, and ſhould be ſorry to think, that human affairs admit of no greater ſtability than what they receive from the caſual humors and characters of particular men.

It is true, thoſe who maintain that the goodneſs of all government conſiſts in the goodneſs of the adminiſtration, may cite many particular inſtances in hiſtory, where the very ſame government, in different hands, has varied ſuddenly into the two oppoſite extremes of good and bad. Compare the French government under Henry III. and under Henry IV. Oppreſſion, levity, artifice, on the part of the rulers; faction, ſedition, treachery, rebellion, diſloyalty, on the part of the ſubjects: Theſe compoſe the character of the former miſerable era. But when the patriot and heroic prince who ſucceeded, was once firmly ſeated on the throne, the government, the people, every thing ſeemed to be totally changed; and all from the difference of the temper and conduct of theſe two ſovereigns. Inſtances of this kind may be multiplied almoſt without number, from ancient as well as modern hiſtory, foreign as well as domeſtic.

But here it may be proper to make a diſtinction. All abſolute governments muſt very much depend on the adminiſtration; and this is one of the great

inconveniences attending that form of government. But a republican and free government would be an obvious abſurdity, if the particular checks and controls, provided by the conſtitution, had really no influence, and made it not the intereſt, even of bad men, to act for the public good. Such is the intention of theſe forms of government; and ſuch is their real effect, where they are wiſely conſtituted: As on the other hand, they are the ſource of all diſorder, and of the blackeſt crimes, where either ſkill or honeſty has been wanting in their original frame and inſtitution.

So great is the force of laws, and of particular forms of government, and ſo little dependence have they on the humors and tempers of men, that conſequences almoſt as general and certain may ſometimes be deduced from them, as any which the mathematical ſciences afford us.

The conſtitution of the Roman republic gave the whole legiſlative power to the people, without allowing a negative voice either to the nobility or conſuls. This unbounded power they poſſeſſed in a collective, not in a repreſentative, body. The conſequences were: When the people, by ſucceſs and conqueſt, had become very numerous, and had ſpread themſelves to a great diſtance from the capital, the city-tribes, though the moſt contemptible, carried almoſt every vote: They were, therefore, moſt cajoled by every one that affected popularity: They were ſupported in idleneſs by the general diſtribution of corn, and by particular bribes, which they received from almoſt every

candidate: By this means they became every day more licentious, and the Campus Martius was a perpetual ſcene of tumult and ſedition: Armed ſlaves were introduced among theſe raſcally citizens, ſo that the whole government fell into anarchy; and the greateſt happineſs which the Romans could look for, was the deſpotic power of the Cæſars. Such are the effects of democracy without a repreſentative.

A Nobility may poſſeſs the whole, or any part of the legiſlative power of a ſtate, in two different ways. Either every nobleman ſhares the power as part of the whole body; or the whole body enjoys the power as compoſed of parts, which have each a diſtinct power and authority. The Venetian ariſtocracy is an inſtance of the firſt kind of government: The Poliſh of the ſecond. In the Venetian government the whole body of nobility poſſeſs the whole power, and no nobleman has any authority which he receives not from the whole. In the Poliſh government, every nobleman, by means of his fiefs, has a diſtinct hereditary authority over his vaſſals; and the whole body has no authority but what it receives from the concurrence of its parts. The different operations and tendencies of theſe two ſpecies of government might be made apparent even *a priori*. A Venetian nobility is preferable to a Poliſh, let the humors and education of men be ever ſo much varied. A nobility, who poſſeſs their power in common, will preſerve peace and order both among themſelves and their ſubjects; and no member can have authority enough to

control the laws for a moment. The nobles will preſerve their authority over the people; but without any grievous tyranny, or any breach of private property; becauſe ſuch a tyrannical government promotes not the intereſts of the whole body, however it may that of ſome individuals. There will be a diſtinction of rank between the nobility and people; but this will be the only diſtinction in the ſtate. The whole nobility will form one body, and the whole people another, without any of thoſe private feuds and animoſities which ſpread ruin and deſolation every where. It is eaſy to ſee the diſadvantages of a Poliſh nobility in every one of theſe particulars.

It is impoſſible ſo to conſtitute a free government, as that a ſingle perſon, call him doge, prince or king, ſhall poſſeſs a large ſhare of power, and ſhall form a proper balance or counterpoiſe to the other parts of the legiſlature. This chief magiſtrate may be either *elective* or *hereditary*; and though the former inſtitution may, to a ſuperficial view, appear the moſt advantageous, yet a more accurate inſpection will diſcover in it greater inconveniences than in the latter, and ſuch as are founded on cauſes and principles eternal and immutable. The filling of the throne, in ſuch a government, is a point of too great and too general intereſt, not to divide the whole people into factions: Whence a civil war, the greateſt of ills, may be apprehended, almoſt with certainty, upon every vacancy. The prince elected muſt be either a *Foreigner* or a *Native*: The former will be ignorant of the people

whom he is to govern; ſuſpicious of his new ſubjects, and ſuſpected by them; giving his confidence entirely to ſtrangers, who will have no other care but of enriching themſelves in the quickeſt manner while their maſter's favor and authority are able to ſupport them. A native will carry into the throne all his private animoſities and friendſhips, and will never be viewed in his elevation, without exciting the ſentiment of envy in thoſe who formerly conſidered him as their equal. Not to mention that a crown is too high a reward ever to be given to merit alone; and will always induce the candidates to employ force, or money, or intrigue, to procure the votes of the electors: So that ſuch an election will give no better chance for ſuperior merit in the prince, than if the ſtate had truſted to birth alone for determining their ſovereign.

It may therefore be pronounced as an univerſal axiom in politics, *That a hereditary prince, a nobility without vaſſals, and a people voting by their repreſentatives, form the beſt* MONARCHY ARISTOCRACY, *and* DEMOCRACY. But in order to prove more fully, that politics admit of general truths, which are invariable by the humor or education either of ſubject or ſovereign, it may not be amiſs to obſerve ſome other principles of this ſcience which, may ſeem to deſerve that character.

It may eaſily be obſerved, that though free governments have been commonly the moſt happy for thoſe who partake of their freedom; yet are they the moſt ruinous and oppreſſive to their provinces: And this obſervation may, I believe,

be fixed as a maxim of the kind we are here ſpeaking of. When a monarch extends his dominions by conqueſt, he ſoon learns to conſider his old and his new ſubjects as on the ſame footing; becauſe, in reality, all his ſubjects are to him the ſame, except the few friends and favorites with whom he is perſonally acquainted. He does not, therefore, make any diſtinction between them in his *general* laws; and, at the ſame time, is careful to prevent all *particular* acts of oppreſſion on the one as well as on the other. But a free ſtate neceſſarily makes a great diſtinction; and muſt always do ſo, till men learn to love their neighbours as well as themſelves. The conquerors, in ſuch a government, are all legiſlators; and will be ſure to contrive matters, by reſtrictions on trade and by taxes, ſo as to draw ſome private as well as public advantage from their conqueſts. Provincial governors have alſo a better chance, in a republic, to eſcape with their plunder, by means of bribery or intrigue; and their fellow-citizens, who find their own ſtate to be enriched by the ſpoils of the ſubject provinces, will be the more inclined to tolerate ſuch abuſes. Not to mention, that it is a neceſſary precaution in a free ſtate to change the governors frequently; which obliges theſe temporary tyrants to be more expeditious and rapacious, that they may accumulate ſufficient wealth before they give place to their ſucceſſors. What cruel tyrants were the Romans over the world during the time of the commonwealth! It is true, they had laws to prevent oppreſſion in their provincial magiſtrates;

but

but Cicero informs us, that the Romans could not better conſult the intereſts of the provinces than by repealing theſe very laws. For in that caſe, ſays he, our magiſtrates, having entire impunity, would plunder no more than would ſatisfy their own rapacioufneſs; whereas, at preſent, they muſt alſo ſatisfy that of their judges, and of all the great men in Rome, of whoſe protection they ſtand in need. Who can read of the cruelties and oppreſſions of Verres without horror and aſtoniſhment? And who is not touched with indignation to hear, that after Cicero had exhauſted on that abandoned criminal all the thunders of his eloquence, and had prevailed ſo far as to get him condemned to the utmoſt extent of the laws; yet that cruel tyrant lived peaceably to old age, in opulence and eaſe; and, thirty years afterwards, was put into the proſcription by Mark Anthony, on account of his exorbitant wealth, where he fell with Cicero himſelf and all the moſt virtuous men of Rome? After the diſſolution of the commonwealth, the Roman yoke became eaſier upon the provinces, as Tacitus informs us [2]; and it may be obſerved, that many of the worſt emperors, Domitian [3] for inſtance, were careful to prevent all oppreſſion on the provinces. In [4] Tiberius's

[2] Ann. lib. 1. cap. 2. [3] Suet. in vita Domit.

[4] *Egregium reſumendæ libertati tempus, ſi ipſi florentes, quam inops Italia, quam imbellis urbana plebs, nihil validum in exercitibus, niſi quod externum cogitarent.* Tacit. Ann. lib. 3.

time, Gaul was eſteemed richer than Italy itſelf; nor do I find, during the whole time of the Roman monarchy, that the empire became leſs rich or populous in any of its provinces, though indeed its valor and military diſcipline were always upon the decline. The oppreſſion and tyranny of the Carthaginians over their ſubject-ſtates in Africa went ſo far, as we learn from Polybius [1], that, not content with exacting the half of all the produce of the land, which of itſelf was a very high rent, they alſo loaded them with many other taxes. If we paſs from ancient to modern times, we ſhall ſtill find the obſervation to hold. The provinces of abſolute monarchies are always better treated than thoſe of free ſtates. Compare the *Païs conquis* of France with Ireland, and you will be convinced of this truth; though this latter kingdom, being in a good meaſure peopled from England, poſſeſſes ſo many rights and privileges as ſhould naturally make it challenge better treatment than that of a conquered province. Corſica is alſo an obvious inſtance to the ſame purpoſe.

There is an obſervation in Machiavel with regard to the conqueſts of Alexander the Great, which, I think, may be regarded as one of thoſe eternal political truths which no time nor accidents can vary. It may ſeem ſtrange, ſays that politician, that ſuch ſudden conqueſts as thoſe of Alexander ſhould be poſſeſſed ſo peaceably by his ſucceſſors; and that the Perſians, during all the confuſions and

[1] Lib. 1. cap. 72.

civil wars among the Greeks, never made the ſmalleſt effort towards the recovery of their former independent government. To ſatisfy us concerning the cauſe of this remarkable event, we may conſider, that a monarch may govern his ſubjects in two different ways: He may either follow the maxims of the eaſtern princes, and ſtretch his authority ſo far as to leave no diſtinction of rank among his ſubjects but what proceeds immediately from himſelf; no advantages of birth; no hereditary honors and poſſeſſions; and, in a word, no credit among the people, except from his commiſſion alone. Or a monarch may exert his power after a milder manner, like other European princes, and leave other ſources of honor beſide his ſmile and favor; birth, titles, poſſeſſions, valor, integrity, knowledge, or great and fortunate atchievements. In the former ſpecies of government, after a conqueſt, it is impoſſible ever to ſhake off the yoke, ſince no one poſſeſſes among the people ſo much perſonal credit and authority as to begin ſuch an enterpriſe; whereas, in the latter, the leaſt misfortune or diſcord among the victors will encourage the vanquiſhed to take arms, who have leaders ready to prompt and conduct them in every undertaking [a].

Such is the reaſoning of Machiavel, which ſeems ſolid and concluſive; though I wiſh he had not mixed falſhood with truth, in aſſerting, that monarchies, governed according to eaſtern policy, though more eaſily kept when once ſubdued, yet

[a] See NOTE [A].

are the moſt difficult to ſubdue; ſince they cannot contain any powerful ſubject, whoſe diſcontent and faction may facilitate the enterpriſes of an enemy. For, beſides that ſuch a tyrannical government enervates the courage of men, and renders them indifferent towards the fortunes of their ſovereign; beſides this, I ſay, we find by experience, that even the temporary and delegated authority of the generals and magiſtrates, being always in ſuch governments as abſolute within its ſphere as that of the prince himſelf, is able, with barbarians accuſtomed to a blind ſubmiſſion, to produce the moſt dangerous and fatal revolutions. So that, in every reſpect, a gentle government is preferable, and gives the greateſt ſecurity to the ſovereign as well as to the ſubject.

Legiſlators, therefore, ought not to truſt the future government of a ſtate entirely to chance, but ought to provide a ſyſtem of laws to regulate the adminiſtration of public affairs to the lateſt poſterity. Effects will always correſpond to cauſes; and regulations, in any commonwealth, are the moſt valuable legacy that can be left to future ages. In the ſmalleſt court or office, the ſtated forms and methods by which buſineſs muſt be conducted are found to be a conſiderable check on the natural depravity of mankind. Why ſhould not the caſe be the ſame in public affairs? Can we aſcribe the ſtability and wiſdom of the Venetian government, through ſo many ages, to any thing but the form of government? And is it not eaſy to point out thoſe defects in the original conſti-

tution which produced the tumultuous governments of Athens and Rome, and ended at laſt in the ruin of theſe two famous republics? And ſo little dependence has this affair on the humors and education of particular men, that one part of the ſame republic may be wiſely conducted, and another weakly, by the very ſame men, merely on account of the difference of the forms and inſtitutions by which theſe parts are regulated. Hiſtorians inform us that this was actually the caſe with Genoa. For while the ſtate was always full of ſedition and tumult and diſorder, the bank of St. George, which had become a conſiderable part of the people, was conducted for ſeveral ages with the utmoſt integrity and wiſdom [7].

The ages of greateſt public ſpirit are not always moſt eminent for private virtue. Good laws may beget order and moderation in the government where the manners and cuſtoms have inſtilled little humanity or juſtice into the tempers of men. The moſt illuſtrious period of the Roman hiſtory, conſidered in a political view, is that between the beginning of the firſt and end of the laſt Punic war;

[7] *Eſempio veramente raro, e da Filoſofi in tante loro imaginate e vedute Republiche mai non trovato, vedere dentro ad un medeſimo cerchio, fra medeſimi cittadini, la libertà e la tirannide, la vita civile e la corotta, la giuſtizia e la licenza; perchè quell' ordine ſolo mantiene quella città piena di coſtumi antichi e venerabili. E s'egli avveniſſe (che col tempo in ogni modo avverrà) che San Giorgio tutta quella città occupaſſe, ſarebbe quella una Republica più della Veneziana memorabile.* Delle Hiſt. Fiorentine, lib. 8.

the due balance between the nobility and people being then fixed by the conteſts of the tribunes, and not being yet loſt by the extent of conqueſts. Yet at this very time the horrid practice of poiſoning was ſo common, that, during part of a ſeaſon, a *Prætor* puniſhed capitally for this crime above three thouſand [8] perſons in a part of Italy; and found informations of this nature ſtill multiplying upon him. There is a ſimilar, or rather a worſe inſtance [9], in the more early times of the commonwealth. So depraved in private life were that people, whom in their hiſtories we ſo much admire. I doubt not but they were really more virtuous during the time of the two *Triumvirates*, when they were tearing their common country to pieces, and ſpreading ſlaughter and deſolation over the face of the earth, merely for the choice of tyrants [10].

Here, then, is a ſufficient inducement to maintain with the utmoſt ZEAL, in every free ſtate, thoſe forms and inſtitutions by which liberty is ſecured, the public good conſulted, and the avarice or ambition of particular men reſtrained and puniſhed. Nothing does more honor to human nature, than to ſee it ſuſceptible of ſo noble a paſſion; as nothing can be a greater indication of meanneſs of heart in any man, than to ſee him deſtitute of it. A man who loves only himſelf,

[8] T. Livii, lib. 40. cap. 43.

[9] *Ibid.* lib. 8. cap. 18.

[10] *L'Aigle contre L'Aigle, Romains contre Romains, Combattant ſeulement pour le choix de tyrans.*

CORNEILLE.

without regard to friendſhip and deſert, merits the ſevereſt blame; and a man who is only ſuſceptible of friendſhip, without public ſpirit or a regard to the community, is deficient in the moſt material part of virtue.

But this is a ſubject which needs not be longer inſiſted on at preſent. There are enow of zealots on both ſides who kindle up the paſſions of their partiſans, and, under pretence of public good, purſue the intereſts and ends of their particular faction. For my part, I ſhall always be more fond of promoting moderation than zeal; though perhaps the ſureſt way of producing moderation in every party is to increaſe our zeal for the public. Let us therefore try, if it be poſſible, from the foregoing doctrine, to draw a leſſon of moderation with regard to the parties into which our country is at preſent divided; at the ſame time, that we allow not this moderation to abate the induſtry and paſſion with which every individual is bound to purſue the good of his country.

Thoſe who either attack or defend a miniſter in ſuch a government as ours, where the utmoſt liberty is allowed, always carry matters to an extreme, and exaggerate his merit or demerit with regard to the public. His enemies are ſure to charge him with the greateſt enormities both in domeſtic and foreign management; and there is no meanneſs or crime of which, in their account, he is not capable. Unneceſſary wars, ſcandalous treaties, profuſion of public treaſure, oppreſſive taxes, every kind of mal-adminiſtration is aſcribed to

him. To aggravate the charge, his pernicious conduct, it is ſaid, will extend its baneful influence even to poſterity, by undermining the beſt conſtitution in the world, and diſordering that wiſe ſyſtem of laws, inſtitutions, and cuſtoms, by which our anceſtors, during ſo many centuries, have been ſo happily governed. He is not only a wicked miniſter in himſelf, but has removed every ſecurity provided againſt wicked miniſters for the future.

On the other hand, the partiſans of the miniſter make his panegyric run as high as the accuſation againſt him, and celebrate his wiſe, ſteady, and moderate conduct in every part of his adminiſtration. The honor and intereſt of the nation ſupported abroad, public credit maintained at home, perſecution reſtrained, faction ſubdued; the merit of all theſe bleſſings is aſcribed ſolely to the miniſter. At the ſame time, he crowns all his other merits by a religious care of the beſt conſtitution in the world, which he has preſerved in all its parts, and has tranſmitted entire, to be the happineſs and ſecurity of the lateſt poſterity.

When this accuſation and panegyric are received by the partiſans of each party, no wonder they beget an extraordinary ferment on both ſides, and fill the nation with violent animoſities. But I would fain perſuade theſe party-zealots, that there is a flat contradiction both in the accuſation and panegyric; and that it were impoſſible for either of them to run ſo high, were it not for this contradiction. If our conſtitution be really *that noble fabric, the pride*

of Britain, the envy of our neighbours, raiſed by the labor of ſo many centuries, repaired at the expenſe of ſo many millions, and cemented by ſuch a profuſion of blood [11]; I ſay, if our conſtitution does in any degree deſerve theſe eulogies, it would never have ſuffered a wicked and weak miniſter to govern triumphantly for a courſe of twenty years, when oppoſed by the greateſt geniuſes in the nation, who exerciſed the utmoſt liberty of tongue and pen, in parliament, and in their frequent appeals to the people. But if the miniſter be wicked and weak to the degree ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on, the conſtitution muſt be faulty in its original principles; and he cannot conſiſtently be charged with undermining the beſt form of government in the world. A conſtitution is only ſo far good, as it provides a remedy againſt mal-adminiſtration; and if the Britiſh, when in its greateſt vigor, and repaired by two ſuch remarkable events as the *Revolution* and *Acceſſion*, by which our ancient royal family was ſacrificed to it; if our conſtitution, I ſay, with ſo great advantages, does not, in fact, provide any ſuch remedy, we are rather beholden to any miniſter who undermines it, and affords us an opportunity of erecting a better in its place.

I would employ the ſame topics to moderate the zeal of thoſe who defend the miniſter. *Is our conſtitution ſo excellent?* Then a change of miniſtry can be no ſuch dreadful event; ſince it is eſſential to ſuch a conſtitution, in every miniſtry, both to preſerve itſelf from violation, and to prevent all

[11] *Diſſertation on Parties*, Letter 10.

enormities in the adminiſtration. *Is our conſtitution very bad?* Then ſo extraordinary a jealouſy and apprehenſion on account of changes is ill placed, and a man ſhould no more be anxious in this caſe, than a huſband, who had married a woman from the ſtews, ſhould be watchful to prevent her infidelity. Public affairs, in ſuch a government, muſt neceſſarily go to confuſion, by whatever hands they are conducted; and the zeal of *patriots* is in that caſe much leſs requiſite than the patience and ſubmiſſion of *philoſophers*. The virtue and good intentions of Cato and Brutus are highly laudable; but to what purpoſe did their zeal ſerve? Only to haſten the fatal period of the Roman government, and render its convulſions and dying agonies more violent and painful.

I would not be underſtood to mean, that public affairs deſerve no care and attention at all. Would men be moderate and conſiſtent, their claims might be admitted, at leaſt might be examined. The *country-party* might ſtill aſſert, that our conſtitution, though excellent, will admit of mal-adminiſtration to a certain degree; and therefore, if the miniſter be bad, it is proper to oppoſe him with a *ſuitable* degree of zeal. And, on the other hand, the *court-party* may be allowed, upon the ſuppoſition that the miniſter were good, to defend, and with *ſome* zeal too, his adminiſtration. I would only perſuade men not to contend as if they were fighting *pro aris et focis*, and change a good conſtitution into a bad one by the violence of their factions.

I have not here conſidered any thing that is perſonal in the preſent controverſy. In the beſt civil conſtitution, where every man is reſtrained by the moſt rigid laws, it is eaſy to diſcover either the good or bad intentions of a miniſter, and to judge whether his perſonal character deſerve love or hatred. But ſuch queſtions are of little importance to the public, and lay thoſe who employ their pens upon them under a juſt ſuſpicion either of malevolence or of flattery.

ESSAY IV.

OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

NOTHING appears more ſurpriſing to thoſe who conſider human affairs with a philoſophical eye, than the eaſineſs with which the many are governed by the few, and the implicit ſubmiſſion with which men reſign their own ſentiments and paſſions to thoſe of their rulers. When we inquire by what means this wonder is effected, we ſhall find, that as FORCE is always on the ſide of the governed, the governors have nothing to ſupport them but opinion. It is therefore on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the moſt deſpotic and moſt military governments, as well as to the moſt free and moſt popular. The ſoldan of Egypt, or the emperor of Rome, might drive his harmleſs ſubjects, like brute beaſts, againſt their ſentiments and inclinations;

But he muſt, at leaſt, have led his *mamelukes* or *prætorian bands*, like men, by their opin ion.

Opinion is of two kinds; to wit, opinion of intereſt, and opinion of right. By opinion of intereſt, I chiefly underſtand the ſenſe of the general advantage which is reaped from government, together with the perſuaſion, that the particular government which is eſtabliſhed, is equally advantageous with any other that could eaſily be ſettled. When this opinion prevails among the generality of a ſtate, or among thoſe who have the force in their hands, it gives great ſecurity to any government.

Right is of two kinds; right to POWER and right to PROPERTY: What prevalence opinion of the firſt kind has over mankind, may eaſily be underſtood, by obſerving the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government, and even to thoſe names which have had the ſanction of antiquity. Antiquity always begets the opinion of right; and whatever diſadvantageous ſentiments we may entertain of mankind, they are always found to be prodigal both of blood and treaſure in the maintenance of public juſtice. There is, indeed, no particular, in which, at firſt ſight, there may appear a greater contradiction in the frame of the human mind than the preſent. When men act in a faction, they are apt, without ſhame or remorſe, to neglect all the ties of honor and morality, in order to ſerve their party; and yet when a faction is formed upon a point of right or principle, there is no occaſion where men diſcover

a greater obſtinacy, and a more determined ſenſe of juſtice and equity. The ſame ſocial diſpoſition of mankind is the cauſe of theſe contradictory appearances.

It is ſufficiently underſtood, that the opinion of right to property is of moment in all matters of government. A noted author has made property the foundation of all government; and moſt of our political writers ſeem inclined to follow him in that particular. This is carrying the matter too far; but ſtill it muſt be owned, that the opinion of right to property has a great influence in this ſubject.

Upon theſe three opinions therefore, of public *intereſt*, of *right to power*, and of *right to property*, are all governments founded, and all authority of the few over the many. There are indeed other principles, which add force to theſe, and determine, limit, or alter their operation; ſuch as *ſelf-intereſt*, *fear*, and *affection*: But ſtill we may aſſert, that theſe other principles can have no influence alone, but ſuppoſe the antecedent influence of thoſe opinions above-mentioned. They are, therefore, to be eſteemed the ſecondary, not the original principles of government.

For, *firſt*, as to *ſelf-intereſt*, by which I mean the expectation of particular rewards, diſtinct from the general protection which we receive from government, it is evident that the magiſtrate's authority muſt be antecedently eſtabliſhed, at leaſt be hoped for, in order to produce this expectation. The proſpect of reward may augment his authority

with regard to ſome particular perſons; but can never give birth to it with regard to the public. Men naturally look for the greateſt favors from their friends and acquaintance; and therefore the hopes of any conſiderable number of the ſtate would never centre in any particular ſet of men, if theſe men had no other title to magiſtracy, and had no ſeparate influence over the opinions of mankind. The ſame obſervation may be extended to the other two principles of *fear* and *affection*. No man would have any reaſon to *fear* the fury of a tyrant, if he had no authority over any but from fear; ſince, as a ſingle man, his bodily force can reach but a ſmall way, and all the farther power he poſſeſſes muſt be founded either on our own opinion, or on the preſumed opinion of others. And though *affection* to wiſdom and virtue in a *ſovereign* extends very far, and has great influence; yet he muſt antecedently be ſuppoſed inveſted with a public character, otherwiſe the public eſteem will ſerve him in no ſtead, nor will his virtue have any influence beyond a narrow ſphere.

A government may endure for ſeveral ages, though the balance of power and the balance of property do not coincide. This chiefly happens where any rank or order of the ſtate has acquired a large ſhare in the property; but, from the original conſtitution of the Government, has no ſhare in the power. Under what pretence would any individual of that order aſſume authority in public affairs? As men are commonly much attached to their ancient government, it is not to be expected

that the public would ever favor ſuch uſurpations. But where the original conſtitution allows any ſhare of power, though ſmall, to an order of men who poſſeſs a large ſhare of the property, it is eaſy for them gradually to ſtretch their authority, and bring the balance of power to coincide with that of property. This has been the caſe with the houſe of commons in England.

Moſt writers, that have treated of the Britiſh government, have ſuppoſed, that as the lower houſe repreſents all the commons of Great Britain, its weight in the ſcale is proportioned to the property and power of all whom it repreſents. But this principle muſt not be received as abſolutely true: For though the people are apt to attach themſelves more to the houſe of commons than to any other member of the conſtitution, that houſe being choſen by them as their repreſentatives, and as the public guardians of their liberty; yet are there inſtances where the houſe, even when in oppoſition to the crown, has not been followed by the people; as we may particularly obſerve of the *Tory* houſe of commons in the reign of King William. Were the members obliged to receive inſtructions from their conſtituents, like the Dutch deputies, this would entirely alter the caſe; and if ſuch immenſe power and riches, as thoſe of all the commons of Great Britain, were brought into the ſcale, it is not eaſy to conceive, that the crown could either influence that multitude of people, or withſtand that overbalance of property. It is true, the crown has great influence over the

collective body in the elections of members: but were this influence, which at preſent is only exerted once in ſeven years, to be employed in bringing over the people to every vote, it would ſoon be waſted; and no ſkill, popularity, or revenue could ſupport it. I muſt, therefore, be of opinion, that an alteration in this particular would introduce a total alteration in our government, and would ſoon reduce it to a pure republic; and, perhaps, to a republic of no inconvenient form. For though the people, collected in a body like the Roman tribes, be quite unfit for government, yet, when diſperſed in ſmall bodies, they are more ſuſceptible both of reaſon and order; the force of popular currents and tides is, in a great meaſure, broken; and the public intereſt may be purſued with ſome method and conſtancy. But it is needleſs to reaſon any farther concerning a form of government which is never likely to have place in Great Britain, and which ſeems not to be the aim of any party amongſt us. Let us cheriſh and improve our ancient government as much as poſſible, without encouraging a paſſion for ſuch dangerous novelties.

ESSAY V.

OF THE ORIGIN OF GOVERNMENT.

MAN, born in a family, is compelled to maintain ſociety, from neceſſity, from natural inclination, and from habit. The ſame creature, in his farther progreſs, is engaged to eſtabliſh political ſociety, in order to adminiſter juſtice; without which there can be no peace among them, nor ſafety, nor mutual intercourſe. We are, therefore, to look upon all the vaſt apparatus of our government, as having ultimately no other object or purpoſe but the diſtribution of juſtice, or, in other words, the ſupport of the twelve judges. Kings and parliaments, fleets and armies, officers of the court and revenue, ambaſſadors, miniſters, and privy-counſellors, are all ſubordinate in their end to this part of adminiſtration. Even the clergy, as their duty leads them to inculcate morality, may juſtly be thought, ſo far as regards this world, to have no other uſeful object of their inſtitution.

All men are ſenſible of the neceſſity of juſtice to maintain peace and order; and all men are ſenſible of the neceſſity of peace and order for the maintenance of ſociety. Yet, notwithſtanding this ſtrong and obvious neceſſity, ſuch is the frailty or perverſeneſs of our nature! it is impoſſible to keep men, faithfully and unerringly, in the paths of juſtice. Some extraordinary circumſtances may happen, in which a man finds his intereſts to be

more promoted by fraud or rapine, than hurt by the breach which his injuſtice makes in the ſocial union. But much more frequently he is ſeduced from his great and important, but diſtant intereſts, by the allurement of preſent, though often very frivolous, temptations. This great weakneſs is incurable in human nature.

Men muſt, therefore, endeavour to palliate what they cannot cure. They muſt inſtitute ſome perſons, under the appellation of magiſtrates, whoſe peculiar office it is, to point out the decrees of equity; to puniſh tranſgreſſors; to correct fraud and violence; and to oblige men, however reluctant, to conſult their own real and permanent intereſts. In a word, Obedience is a new duty which muſt be invented to ſupport that of Juſtice; and the ties of equity muſt be corroborated by thoſe of allegiance.

But ſtill, viewing matters in an abſtract light, it may be thought that nothing is gained by this alliance; and that the factitious duty of obedience, from its very nature, lays as feeble a hold of the human mind as the primitive and natural duty of juſtice. Peculiar intereſts and preſent temptations may overcome the one as well as the other. They are equally expoſed to the ſame inconvenience. And the man who is inclined to be a bad neighbour, muſt be led by the ſame motives, well or ill underſtood, to be a bad citizen and ſubject. Not to mention, that the magiſtrate himſelf may often be negligent, or partial, or unjuſt in his adminiſtration.

Experience, however, proves, that there is a great difference between the caſes. Order in ſociety, we find, is much better maintained by means of government; and our duty to the magiſtrate is more ſtrictly guarded by the principles of human nature, than our duty to our fellow-citizens. The love of dominion is ſo ſtrong in the breaſt of man, that many not only ſubmit to, but court all the dangers, and fatigues, and cares of government; and men, once raiſed to that ſtation, though often led aſtray by private paſſions, find, in ordinary caſes, a viſible intereſt in the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice. The perſons who firſt attain this diſtinction by the conſent, tacit or expreſs, of the people, muſt be endowed with ſuperior perſonal qualities of valor, force, integrity, or prudence, which command reſpect and confidence: and, after government is eſtabliſhed, a regard to birth, rank, and ſtation, has a mighty influence over men, and enforces the decrees of the magiſtrate. The prince or leader exclaims againſt every diſorder which diſturbs his ſociety. He ſummons all his partiſans and all men of probity to aid him in correcting and redreſſing it: and he is readily followed by all indifferent perſons in the execution of his office. He ſoon acquires the power of rewarding theſe ſervices; and in the progreſs of ſociety, he eſtabliſhes ſubordinate miniſters, and often a military force, who find an immediate and a viſible intereſt, in ſupporting his authority. Habit ſoon conſolidates what other principles of human nature had

imperfectly founded; and men, once accuſtomed to obedience, never think of departing from that path, in which they and their anceſtors have conſtantly trod, and to which they are confined by ſo many urgent and viſible motives.

But though this progreſs of human affairs may appear certain and inevitable, and though the ſupport which allegiance brings to juſtice be founded on obvious principles of human nature, it cannot be expected that men ſhould beforehand be able to diſcover them, or foreſee their operation. Government commences more caſually and more imperfectly. It is probable, that the firſt aſcendant of one man over multitudes begun during a ſtate of war; where the ſuperiority of courage and of genius diſcovers itſelf moſt viſibly, where unanimity and concert are moſt requiſite, and where the pernicious effects of diſorder are moſt ſenſibly felt. The long continuance of that ſtate, an incident common among ſavage tribes, enured the people to ſubmiſſion; and if the chieftain poſſeſſed as much equity as prudence and valor, he became, even during peace, the arbiter of all differences, and could gradually, by a mixture of force and conſent, eſtabliſh his authority. The benefit ſenſibly felt from his influence made it be cheriſhed by the people, at leaſt by the peaceable and well-diſpoſed among them: and if his ſon enjoyed the ſame good qualities, government advanced the ſooner to maturity and perfection; but was ſtill in a feeble ſtate, till the farther progreſs of improvement procured the magiſtrate a

revenue, and enabled him to beſtow rewards on the ſeveral inſtruments of his adminiſtration, and to inflict puniſhments on the refractory and diſobedient. Before that period, each exertion of his influence muſt have been particular, and founded on the peculiar circumſtances of the caſe. After it, ſubmiſſion was no longer a matter of choice in the bulk of the community, but was rigorouſly exacted by the authority of the ſupreme magiſtrate.

In all governments, there is a perpetual inteſtine ſtruggle, open or ſecret, between Authority and Liberty; and neither of them can ever abſolutely prevail in the conteſt. A great ſacrifice of liberty muſt neceſſarily be made in every government; yet even the authority which confines liberty, can never, and perhaps ought never, in any conſtitution, to become quite entire and uncontrolable. The ſultan is maſter of the life and fortune of any individual; but will not be permitted to impoſe new taxes on his ſubjects: a French monarch can impoſe taxes at pleaſure; but would find it dangerous to attempt the lives and fortunes of individuals. Religion alſo, in moſt countries, is commonly found to be a very intractable principle; and other principles or prejudices frequently reſiſt all the authority of the civil magiſtrate; whoſe power, being founded on opinion, can never ſubvert other opinions; equally rooted with that of his title to dominion. The government which, in common appellation, receives the appellation of Free, is that which admits of a partition of power among ſeveral members, whoſe

united authority is no leſs, or is commonly greater, than that of any monarch; but who, in the uſual courſe of adminiſtration, muſt act by general and equal laws, that are previouſly known to all the members and to all their ſubjects. In this ſenſe, it muſt be owned, that liberty is the perfection of civil ſociety; but ſtill authority muſt be acknowledged eſſential to its very exiſtence: and in thoſe conteſts which ſo often take place between the one and the other, the latter may, on that account, challenge the preference. Unleſs perhaps one may ſay (and it may be ſaid with ſome reaſon) that a circumſtance, which is eſſential to the exiſtence of civil ſociety, muſt always ſupport itſelf, and needs be guarded with leſs jealouſy, than one that contributes only to its perfection, which the indolence of men is ſo apt to neglect, or their ignorance to overlook.

ESSAY VI.

OF THE INDEPENDENCY OF PARLIAMENT.

POLITICAL writers have eſtabliſhed it as a maxim, that, in contriving any ſyſtem of government, and fixing the ſeveral checks and controls of the conſtitution, every man ought to be ſuppoſed a *knave*, and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private intereſt. By this intereſt we muſt govern him, and by means of it make him, notwithſtanding his inſatiable avarice and

ambition, co-operate to public good. Without this, ſay they, we ſhall in vain boaſt of the advantages of any conſtitution; and ſhall find, in the end, that we have no ſecurity for our liberties or poſſeſſions, except the good-will of our rulers; that is, we ſhall have no ſecurity at all.

It is, therefore, a juſt *political* maxim, *that every man muſt be ſuppoſed a knave:* Though, at the ſame time, it appears ſomewhat ſtrange, that a maxim ſhould be true in *politics* which is falſe in *fact*. But to ſatisfy us on this head, we may conſider, that men are generally more honeſt in their private than in their public capacity, and will go greater lengths to ſerve a party than when their own private intereſt is alone concerned. Honor is a great check upon mankind: But where a conſiderable body of men act together, this check is in a great meaſure removed; ſince a man is ſure to be approved of by his own party for what promotes the common intereſt; and he ſoon learns to deſpiſe the clamors of adverſaries. To which we may add, that every court or ſenate is determined by the greater number of voices; ſo that, if ſelf-intereſt influences only the majority (as it will always do), the whole ſenate follows the allurements of this ſeparate intereſt, and acts as if it contained not one member who had any regard to public intereſt and liberty.

When there offers, therefore, to our cenſure and examination, any plan of government, real or imaginary, where the power is diſtributed among ſeveral courts and ſeveral orders of men,

we ſhould always conſider the ſeparate intereſt of each court and each order; and if we find that, by the ſkilful diviſion of power, this intereſt muſt neceſſarily in its operation concur with public, we may pronounce that government to be wiſe and happy. If, on the contrary, ſeparate intereſt be not checked, and be not directed to the public, we ought to look for nothing but faction, diſorder, and tyranny, from ſuch a government. In this opinion I am juſtified by experience, as well as by the authority of all philoſophers and politicians, both ancient and modern.

How much, therefore, would it have ſurpriſed ſuch a genius as Cicero or Tacitus, to have been told, that in a future age, there ſhould ariſe a very regular ſyſtem of *mixed* government, where the authority was ſo diſtributed, that one rank, whenever it pleaſed, might ſwallow up all the reſt, and engroſs the whole power of the conſtitution. Such a government, they would ſay, will not be a mixed government. For ſo great is the natural ambition of men, that they are never ſatisfied with power; and if one order of men, by purſuing its own intereſt, can uſurp upon every other order, it will certainly do ſo, and render itſelf, as far as poſſible, abſolute, and uncontrolable.

But, in this opinion, experience ſhows they would have been miſtaken. For this is actually the caſe with the Britiſh conſtitution. The ſhare of power allotted by our conſtitution to the houſe of commons is ſo great, that it abſolutely commands

all the other parts of the government. The king's legiſlative power is plainly no proper check to it. For though the king has a negative in framing laws, yet this, in fact, is eſteemed of ſo little moment, that whatever is voted by the two houſes is always ſure to paſs into a law, and the royal aſſent is little better than a form. The principal weight of the crown lies in the executive power. But beſides that the executive power in every government is altogether ſubordinate to the legiſlative; beſides this, I ſay, the exerciſe of this power requires an immenſe expenſe; and the commons have aſſumed to themſelves the ſole right of granting money. How eaſy, therefore, would it be for that houſe to wreſt from the crown all theſe powers, one after another; by making every grant conditional, and chuſing their time ſo well, that their refuſal of ſupply ſhould only diſtreſs the government, without giving foreign powers any advantage over us? Did the houſe of commons depend in the ſame manner on the king, and had none of the members any property but from his gift, would not he command all their reſolutions, and be from that moment abſolute? As to the houſe of lords, they are a very powerful ſupport to the crown, ſo long as they are, in their turn, ſupported by it; but both experience and reaſon ſhow, that they have no force or authority ſufficient to maintain themſelves alone without ſuch ſupport.

How, therefore, ſhall we reſolve this paradox? And by what means is this member of our conſti-

tution confined within the proper limits; ſince, from our very conſtitution, it muſt neceſſarily have as much power as it demands, and can only be confined by itſelf? How is this conſiſtent with our experience of human nature? I anſwer, that the intereſt of the body is here reſtrained by that of the individuals; and that the houſe of commons ſtretches not its power, becauſe ſuch an uſurpation would be contrary to the intereſt of the majority of its members. The crown has ſo many offices at its diſpoſal, that, when aſſiſted by the honeſt and diſintereſted part of the houſe, it will always command the reſolutions of the whole, ſo far, at leaſt, as to preſerve the ancient conſtitution from danger. We may, therefore, give to this influence what name we pleaſe; we may call it by the invidious appellations of *corruption* and *dependence;* but ſome degree and ſome kind of it are inſeparable from the very nature of the conſtitution, and neceſſary to the preſervation of our mixed government.

Inſtead then of aſſerting [1] abſolutely, that the dependence of parliament, in every degree, is an infringement of Britiſh liberty, the country-party ſhould have made ſome conceſſions to their adverſaries, and have only examined what was the proper degree of this dependence, beyond which it became dangerous to liberty. But ſuch a moderation is not to be expected in party-men of any kind. After a conceſſion of this nature, all declamation muſt be

[1] See *Diſſertation on Parties*, throughout.

abandoned; and a calm inquiry into the proper degree of court-influence and parliamentary dependence would have been expected by the readers. And though the advantage, in ſuch a controverſy, might poſſibly remain to the *country-party*, yet the victory would not be ſo complete as they wiſh for; nor would a true patriot have given an entire looſe to his zeal, for fear of running matters into a contrary extreme, by diminiſhing too [2] far the influence of the crown. It was, therefore, thought beſt to deny, that this extreme could ever be dangerous to the conſtitution, or that the crown could ever have too little influence over the members of parliament.

All queſtions concerning the proper medium between extremes are difficult to be decided; both becauſe it is not eaſy to find *words* proper to fix this medium, and becauſe the good and ill, in ſuch caſes, run ſo gradually into each other, as even to render our *ſentiments* doubtful and uncertain. But there is a peculiar difficulty in the preſent caſe, which would embarraſs the moſt knowing and moſt impartial examiner. The power of the crown is always lodged in a ſingle perſon, either king or miniſter; and as this perſon may have either a greater or leſs degree of ambition, capacity, courage, popularity, or fortune, the power, which is too great in one hand, may become too little in another. In pure republics, where the authority is diſtributed among ſeveral aſſemblies or

[2] See NOTE [B].

ſenates, the checks and controls are more regular in their operation; becauſe the members of ſuch numerous aſſemblies may be preſumed to be always nearly equal in capacity and virtue; and it is only their number, riches, or authority, which enter into conſideration. But a limited monarchy admits not of any ſuch ſtability; nor is it poſſible to aſſign to the crown ſuch a determinate degree of power, as will, in every hand, form a proper counterbalance to the other parts of the conſtitution. This is an unavoidable diſadvantage, among the many advantages, attending that ſpecies of government.

ESSAY VII.

WHETHER THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT INCLINES MORE TO ABSOLUTE MONARCHY, OR TO A REPUBLIC?

IT affords a violent prejudice againſt almoſt every ſcience, that no prudent man, however ſure of his principles, dares propheſy concerning any event, or foretel the remote conſequences of things. A phyſician will not venture to pronounce concerning the condition of his patient for a fortnight or a month after: And ſtill leſs dares a politician foretel the ſituation of public affairs a few years hence. Harrington thought himſelf ſo ſure of his general principle, *that the balance of power depends on that of property*, that he ventured to pronounce it impoſſible ever to re-eſtabliſh

monarchy in England: But his book was ſcarcely publiſhed when the king was reſtored; and we ſee, that monarchy has ever ſince ſubſiſted upon the ſame footing as before. Notwithſtanding this unlucky example, I will venture to examine an important queſtion, to wit, *Whether the Britiſh government inclines more to abſolute monarchy, or to a republic; and in which of theſe two ſpecies of government it will moſt probably terminate?* As there ſeems not to be any great danger of a ſudden revolution either way, I ſhall at leaſt eſcape the ſhame attending my temerity, if I ſhould be found to have been miſtaken.

Thoſe who aſſert, That the balance of our government inclines towards abſolute monarchy, may ſupport their opinion by the following reaſons: That property has a great influence on power, cannot poſſibly be denied; but yet the general maxim, *that the balance of one depends on the balance of the other*, muſt be received with ſeveral limitations. It is evident, that much leſs property in a ſingle hand will be able to counterbalance a greater property in ſeveral; not only becauſe it is difficult to make many perſons combine in the ſame views and meaſures, but becauſe property, when united, cauſes much greater dependence than the ſame property when diſperſed. A hundred perſons, of 1000 *l.* a-year a-piece, can conſume all their income, and nobody ſhall ever be the better for them, except their ſervants and tradeſmen, who juſtly regard their profits as the product of their own labor. But a man poſſeſſed of 100,000 *l.* a-year, if

he has either any generoſity, or any cunning, may create a great dependence by obligations, and ſtill a greater by expectations. Hence we may obſerve, that, in all free governments, any ſubject exorbitantly rich, has always created jealouſy, even though his riches bore no proportion to thoſe of the ſtate. Craſſus's fortune, if I remember well, amounted only to about two millions and a half of our money; yet we find, that though his genius was nothing extraordinary, he was able, by means of his riches alone, to counterbalance, during his lifetime, the power of Pompey as well as that of Cæſar, who afterwards became maſter of the world. The wealth of the Medici made them maſters of Florence; though, it is probable, it was not conſiderable, compared to the united property of that opulent republic.

Theſe conſiderations are apt to make one entertain a magnificent idea of the Britiſh ſpirit and love of liberty; ſince we could maintain our free government, during ſo many centuries, againſt our ſovereigns, who, beſides the power and dignity and majeſty of the crown, have always been poſſeſſed of much more property than any ſubject has ever enjoyed in any commonwealth. But it may be ſaid, that this ſpirit, however great, will never be able to ſupport itſelf againſt that immenſe property which is now lodged in the king, and which is ſtill increaſing. Upon a moderate computation, there are near three millions a-year at the diſpoſal of the crown. The civil liſt amounts to near a million; the collection of all taxes to another;

and the employments in the army and navy, together with eccleſiaſtical preferments, to above a third million: An enormous ſum, and what may fairly be computed to be more than a thirtieth part of the whole income and labor of the kingdom. When we add to this great property, the increaſing luxury of the nation, our proneneſs to corruption, together with the great power and prerogatives of the crown, and the command of military force, there is no one but muſt deſpair of being able, without extraordinary efforts, to ſupport our free government much longer under theſe diſadvantages.

On the other hand, thoſe who maintain, That the bias of the Britiſh government leans towards a republic, may ſupport their opinion by ſpecious arguments. It may be ſaid, that though this immenſe property in the crown be joined to the dignity of firſt magiſtrate, and to many other legal powers and prerogatives, which ſhould naturally give it greater influence; yet it really becomes leſs dangerous to liberty upon that very account. Were England a republic, and were any private man poſſeſſed of a revenue, a third, or even a tenth part as large as that of the crown, he would very juſtly excite jealouſy; becauſe he would infallibly have great authority in the government. And ſuch an irregular authority, not avowed by the laws, is always more dangerous than a much greater authority derived from them. A man, poſſeſſed of uſurped power, can ſet no bounds to his pretenſions: His partiſans have liberty to hope for every thing in his favor: His enemies provoke his ambition, with his fears,

by the violence of their oppoſition: And the government being thrown into a ferment, every corrupted humor in the ſtate naturally gathers to him. On the contrary, a legal authority, though great, has always ſome bounds, which terminate both the hopes and pretenſions of the perſon poſſeſſed of it: The laws muſt have provided a remedy againſt its exceſſes: Such an eminent magiſtrate has much to fear, and little to hope, from his uſurpations: And as his legal authority is quietly ſubmitted to, he has ſmall temptation and ſmall opportunity of extending it farther. Beſides, it happens, with regard to ambitious aims and projects, what may be obſerved with regard to ſects of philoſophy and religion. A new ſect excites ſuch a ferment, and is both oppoſed and defended with ſuch vehemence, that it always ſpreads faſter, and multiplies its partiſans with greater rapidity, than any old eſtabliſhed opinion, recommended by the ſanction of the laws and of antiquity. Such is the nature of novelty, that, where any thing pleaſes, it becomes doubly agreeable, if new; but if it diſpleaſes, it is doubly diſpleaſing upon that very account. And, in moſt caſes, the violence of enemies is favorable to ambitious projects, as well as the zeal of partiſans.

It may farther be ſaid, that though men be much governed by intereſt; yet even intereſt itſelf, and all human affairs, are entirely governed by *opinion*. Now, there has been a ſudden and ſenſible change in the opinions of men within theſe laſt

fifty

fifty years, by the progreſs of learning and of liberty. Moſt people, in this iſland, have diveſted themſelves of all ſuperſtitious reverence to names and authority: The clergy have much loſt their credit: Their pretenſions and doctrines have been ridiculed; and even religion can ſcarcely ſupport itſelf in the world. The mere name of *king* commands little reſpect; and to talk of a king as GOD's vicegerent on earth, or to give him any of thoſe magnificent titles which formerly dazzled mankind, would but excite laughter in every one. Though the crown, by means of its large revenue, may maintain its authority in times of tranquillity upon private intereſt and influence; yet, as the leaſt ſhock or convulſion muſt break all theſe intereſts to pieces, the royal power, being no longer ſupported by the ſettled principles and opinions of men, will immediately diſſolve. Had men been in the ſame diſpoſition at the *Revolution* as they are at preſent, monarchy would have run a great riſk of being entirely loſt in this iſland.

Durſt I venture to deliver my own ſentiments amidſt theſe oppoſite arguments, I would aſſert, that unleſs there happen ſome extraordinary convulſion, the power of the crown, by means of its large revenue, is rather upon the increaſe; though, at the ſame time, I own, that its progreſs ſeems very ſlow, and almoſt inſenſible. The tide has run long, and with ſome rapidity, to the ſide of popular government, and is juſt beginning to turn towards monarchy.

It is well known that every government muſt

come to a period; and that death is unavoidable to the political as well as the animal body. But, as one kind of death may be preferable to another, it may be inquired, Whether it be more desirable for the British constitution to terminate in a popular government, or in absolute monarchy? Here I would frankly declare, that, though liberty be preferable to slavery, in almost every case; yet I should rather wish to see an absolute monarch than a republic in this island. For, let us consider, what kind of republic we have reason to expect? The question is not concerning any fine imaginary republic, of which a man may form a plan in his closet. There is no doubt but a popular government may be imagined more perfect than absolute monarchy, or even than our present constitution: But what reason have we to expect that any such government will ever be established in Great Britain, upon the dissolution of our monarchy? If any single person acquire power enough to take our constitution to pieces, and put it up a new, he is really an absolute monarch; and we have already had an instance of this kind, sufficient to convince us, that such a person will never resign his power, or establish any free government. Matters, therefore, must be trusted to their natural progress and operation; and the house of commons, according to its present constitution, must be the only legislature in such a popular government. The inconveniences attending such a situation of affairs present themselves by thousands. If the house of commons, in such a case, ever dissolve itself, which is not to be expected, we may

look for a civil war every election. If it continue itſelf, we ſhall ſuffer all the tyranny of a faction ſubdivided into new factions. And as ſuch a violent government cannot long ſubſiſt, we ſhall, at laſt, after many convulſions and civil wars, find repoſe in abſolute monarchy, which it would have been happier for us to have eſtabliſhed peaceably from the beginning. Abſolute monarchy, therefore, is the eaſieſt death, the true *Euthanaſia* of the Britiſh conſtitution.

Thus, if we have reaſon to be more jealous of monarchy, becauſe the danger is more imminent from that quarter; we have alſo reaſon to be more jealous of popular government, becauſe that danger is more terrible. This may teach us a leſſon of moderation in all our political controverſies.

ESSAY VIII.

OF PARTIES IN GENERAL.

OF all men that diſtinguiſh themſelves by memorable achievements, the firſt place of honor ſeems due to legiſlators and founders of ſtates, who tranſmit a ſyſtem of laws and inſtitutions to ſecure the peace, happineſs, and liberty of future generations. The influence of uſeful inventions in the arts and ſciences may perhaps extend farther than that of wiſe laws, whoſe effects are limited both in time and place; but the benefit ariſing from the former is not ſo ſenſible as that which reſults from the latter. Speculative ſciences do indeed improve the mind; but this advantage reaches only to a few perſons who have

leiſure to apply themſelves to them. And as to practical arts, which increaſe the commodities and enjoyments of life, it is well known, that men's happineſs conſiſts not ſo much in an abundance of theſe, as in the peace and ſecurity with which they poſſeſs them; and thoſe bleſſings can only be derived from good government. Not to mention, that general virtue and good morals in a ſtate, which are ſo requiſite to happineſs, can never ariſe from the moſt refined precepts of philoſophy, or even the ſevereſt injunctions of religion; but muſt proceed entirely from the virtuous education of youth, the effect of wiſe laws and inſtitutions. I muſt therefore preſume to differ from Lord Bacon in this particular; and muſt regard antiquity as ſomewhat unjuſt in its diſtribution of honors, when it made gods of all the inventors of uſeful arts, ſuch as Ceres, Bacchus, Æſculapius; and dignify legiſlators, ſuch as Romulus and Theſeus, only with the appellation of demi-gods and heroes.

As much as legiſlators and founders of ſtates ought to be honored and reſpected among men, as much ought the founders of ſects and factions to be deteſted and hated; becauſe the influence of faction is directly contrary to that of laws. Factions ſubvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fierceſt animoſities among men of the ſame nation, who ought to give mutual aſſiſtance and protection to each other. And what ſhould render the founders of parties more odious, is the difficulty of extirpating theſe weeds, when once they have taken root in any ſtate. They naturally propagate themſelves for many

centuries, and ſeldom end but by the total diſſolution of that government in which they are ſhown. They are, beſides, plants which grow moſt plentifully in the richeſt ſoil, and though abſolute governments be not wholly free from them, it muſt be confeſſed, that they riſe more eaſily, and propagate themſelves faſter in free goverments, where they always infect the legiſlature itſelf, which alone could be able, by the ſteady application of rewards and puniſhments, to eradicate them.

Factions may be divided into perſonal and real; that is, into factions founded on perſonal friendſhip or animoſity among ſuch as compoſe the contending parties, and into thoſe founded on ſome real difference of ſentiment or intereſt. The reaſon of this diſtinction is obvious; though I muſt acknowledge, that parties are ſeldom found pure and unmixed, either of the one kind or the other. It is not often ſeen, that a government divides into factions, where there is no difference in the views of the conſtituent members, either real or apparent, trivial or material; and in thoſe factions which are founded on the moſt real and moſt material difference, there is always obſerved a great deal of perſonal animoſity or affection. But notwithſtanding this mixture, a party may be denominated either perſonal or real, according to that principle which is predominant, and is found to have the greater influence.

Perſonal factions ariſe moſt eaſily in ſmall republics. Every domeſtic quarrel there becomes an affair of ſtate. Love, vanity, emulation, any paſſion, as well as ambition and reſentment, begets public

diviſion. The Neri and Bianchi of Florence, the Fregoſi and Adorni of Genoa, the Coloneſi and Orſini of modern Rome, were parties of this kind.

Men have ſuch a propenſity to divide into perſonal factions, that the ſmalleſt appearance of real difference will produce them. What can be imagined more trivial than the difference between one color of livery and another in horſe-races? Yet this difference begat two moſt inveterate factions in the Greek empire, the Praſini and Veneti, who never ſuſpended their animoſities till they ruined that unhappy government.

We find in the Roman hiſtory a remarkable diſſenſion between two tribes, the Pollia and Papiria, which continued for the ſpace of near three hundred years, and diſcovered itſelf in their ſuffrages at every election of magiſtrates [1]. This faction was the more remarkable, as it could continue for ſo long a tract of time; even though it did not ſpread itſelf, nor draw any of the other tribes into a ſhare of the

[1] As this fact has not been much obſerved by antiquaries or politicians, I ſhall deliver it in the words of the Roman hiſtorian. *Populus* Tuſculanus *cum conjugibus ac liberis* Romam *venit: Ea multitudo, veſte mutata, & ſpecie reorum, tribus circuit, genibus ſe omnium advolvens. Plus itaque miſericordia ad pœnæ veniam impetrandam, quam cauſa ad crimen purgandum, valuit. Tribus omnes, præter Polliam antiquarunt legem.* Polliæ *ſententia fuit, puberes verberatos necari; liberos conjugeſque ſub corona lege belli venire: Memoriamque ejus iræ* Tuſculanis *in pœnæ tam atrocis auctores manſiſſe ad patrum ætatem conſtat; nec quemquam ferme ex* Pollia *tribu candidatum* Papiriam *ferre ſolitum*, T. Livii lib. 8. The Caſtelani and Nicolloti are two mobbiſh factions in Venice, who frequently box together, and then lay aſide their quarrels preſently.

quarrel. If mankind had not a ſtrong propenſity to ſuch diviſions, the indifference of the reſt of the community muſt have ſuppreſſed this fooliſh animoſity, that had not any aliment of new benefits and injuries, of general ſympathy and antipathy, which never fail to take place when the whole ſtate is rent into two equal factions.

Nothing is more uſual than to ſee parties, which have begun upon a real difference, continue even after that difference is loſt. When men are once inliſted on oppoſite ſides, they contract an affection to the perſons with whom they are united, and an animoſity againſt their antagoniſts; and theſe paſſions they often tranſmit to their poſterity. The real difference between Guelf and Ghibbeline was long loſt in Italy before theſe factions were extinguiſhed. The Guelfs adhered to the Pope, the Ghibbelines to the emperor; yet the family of Sforza, who were in alliance with the emperor, though they were Guelfs, being expelled Milan by the king [a] of France, aſſiſted by Jacomo Trivulzio and the Ghibbelines, the Pope concurred with the latter; and they formed leagues with the Pope againſt the Emperor.

The civil wars which aroſe ſome few years ago in Marocco between the *blacks* and *whites*, merely on account of their complexion, are founded on a pleaſant difference. We laugh at them; but I believe, were things rightly examined, we afford much more occaſion of ridicule to the Moors. For

[a] Lewis XII.

what are all the wars of religion which have prevailed in this polite and knowing part of the world? They are certainly more abſurd than the Mooriſh civil wars. The difference of complexion is a ſenſible and a real difference: But the controverſy about an article of faith, which is utterly abſurd and unintelligible, is not a difference in ſentiment, but in a few phraſes and expreſſions; which one party accepts of without underſtanding them, and the other refuſes in the ſame manner.

Real factions may be divided into thoſe from *intereſt*, from *principle*, and from *affection*. Of all factions, the firſt are the moſt reaſonable and the moſt excuſable. Where two orders of men, ſuch as the nobles and people, have a diſtinct authority in a government not very accurately balanced and modelled, they naturally follow a diſtinct intereſt; nor can we reaſonably expect a different conduct, conſidering that degree of ſelfiſhneſs implanted in human nature. It requires great ſkill in a legiſlator to prevent ſuch parties; and many philoſophers are of opinion, that this ſecret, like the *grand elixir or perpetual motion*, may amuſe men in theory, but can never poſſibly be reduced to practice. In deſpotic governments indeed, factions do not often appear; but they are not the leſs real, or rather they are more real and more pernicious upon that very account. The diſtinct orders of men, nobles and people, ſoldiers and merchants, have all a diſtinct intereſt; but the more powerful oppreſſes the weaker with impunity and without

reſiſtance, which begets a ſeeming tranquillity in ſuch governments.

There has been an attempt in ENGLAND to divide the *landed* and *trading* part of the nation, but without ſucceſs. The intereſts of theſe two bodies are not really diſtinct, and never will be ſo, till our public debts increaſe to ſuch a degree as to become altogether oppreſſive and intolerable.

Parties from *principle*, eſpecially abſtract ſpeculative principle, are known only to modern times, and are perhaps the moſt extraordinary and unaccountable *phenomenon* that has yet appeared in human affairs. Where different principles beget a contrariety of conduct, which is the caſe with all different political principles, the matter may be more eaſily explained. A man who eſteems the true right of government to lie in one man or one family, cannot eaſily agree with his fellow-citizen who thinks that another man or family is poſſeſſed of this right. Each naturally wiſhes that right may take place, according to his own notions of it. But where the difference of principle is attended with no contrariety of action, but every one may follow his own way without interfering with his neighbour, as happens in all religious controverſies; what madneſs, what fury, can beget ſuch unhappy and ſuch fatal diviſions!

Two men travelling on the highway, the one eaſt, the other weſt, can eaſily paſs each other if the way be broad enough: but two men, reaſoning upon oppoſite principles of religion, cannot ſo eaſily paſs without ſhocking; though one ſhould

think that the way were alſo, in that caſe, ſufficiently broad, and that each might proceed without interruption in his own courſe. But ſuch is the nature of the human mind, that it always lays hold on every mind that approaches it; and as it is wonderfully fortified by an unanimity of ſentiments, ſo is it ſhocked and diſturbed by any contrariety. Hence the eagerneſs which moſt people diſcover in a diſpute; and hence their impatience of oppoſition, even in the moſt ſpeculative and indifferent opinions.

This principle, however frivolous it may appear, ſeems to have been the origin of all religious wars and diviſions. But as this principle is univerſal in human nature, its effects would not have been confined to one age and to one ſect of religion, did it not there concur with other more accidental cauſes, which raiſe it to ſuch a height, as to produce the greateſt miſery and devaſtation. Moſt religions of the ancient world aroſe in the unknown ages of government, when men were as yet barbarous and uninſtructed, and the prince, as well as peaſant, was diſpoſed to receive, with implicit faith, every pious tale or fiction which was offered him. The magiſtrate embraced the religion of the people, and entering cordially into the care of ſacred matters, naturally acquired an authority in them, and united the eccleſiaſtical with the civil power. But the *Chriſtian* religion ariſing, while principles directly oppoſite to it were firmly eſtabliſhed in the polite part of the world, who deſpiſed the nation that firſt broached this novelty; no wonder that, in ſuch circumſtances, it was but little

countenanced by the civil magiſtrate, and that the prieſthood was allowed to engroſs all the authority in the new ſect. So bad a uſe did they make of this power, even in thoſe early times, that the primitive perſecutions may, perhaps *in part* [3], be aſcribed to the violence inſtilled by them into their followers. And the ſame principles of prieſtly government continuing, after Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion, they have engendered a ſpirit of perſecution, which has ever ſince been the poiſon of human ſociety, and the ſource of the moſt inveterate factions in every government. Such diviſions, therefore, on the part of the people, may juſtly be eſteemed factions of *principle*; but, on the part of the prieſts, who are the prime movers, they are really factions of *intereſt*.

There is another cauſe (beſides the authority of the prieſts, and the ſeparation of the eccleſiaſtical and civil powers) which has contributed to render Chriſtendom the ſcene of religious wars and diviſions. Religions, that ariſe in ages totally ignorant and barbarous, conſiſt moſtly of traditional tales and fictions, which may be different in every ſect, without being contrary to each other; and even when they are contrary, every one adheres to the tradition of his own ſect, without much reaſoning or diſputation. But as philoſophy was widely ſpread over the world at the time when Chriſtianity aroſe, the teachers of the new ſect were obliged to form a ſyſtem of ſpeculative opinions; to divide, with

[3] See NOTE [C].

ſome accuracy, their articles of faith; and to explain, comment, confute, and defend, with all the ſubtilty of argument and ſcience. Hence naturally aroſe keenneſs in diſpute, when the Chriſtian religion came to be ſplit into new diviſions and hereſies: And this keenneſs aſſiſted the prieſts in their policy, of begetting a mutual hatred and antipathy among their deluded followers. Sects of philoſophy, in the ancient world, were more zealous than parties of religion; but in modern times, parties of religion are more furious and enraged than the moſt cruel factions that ever aroſe from intereſt and ambition.

I have mentioned parties from *affection* as a kind of *real* parties, beſide thoſe from *intereſt* and *principle*. By parties from affection, I underſtand thoſe which are founded on the different attachment of men towards particular families and perſons, whom they deſire to rule over them. Theſe factions are often very violent; though, I muſt own, it may ſeem unaccountable, that men ſhould attach themſelves ſo ſtrongly to perſons with whom they are no wiſe acquainted, whom perhaps they never ſaw, and from whom they never received, nor can ever hope for, any favor. Yet this we often find to be the caſe, and even with men who, on other occaſions, diſcover no great generoſity of ſpirit, nor are found to be eaſily tranſported by friendſhip beyond their own intereſt. We are apt to think the relation between us and our ſovereign very cloſe and intimate. The ſplendor of majeſty and power beſtows an importance on the fortunes

even of a ſingle perſon: And when a man's good-nature does not give him this imaginary intereſt, his ill-nature will, from ſpite and oppoſition to perſons whoſe ſentiments are different from his own.

ESSAY IX.

OF THE PARTIES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

WERE the Britiſh government propoſed as a ſubject of ſpeculation, one would immediately perceive in it a ſource of diviſion and party, which it would be almoſt impoſſible for it, under any adminiſtration, to avoid. The juſt balance between the republican and monarchical part of our conſtitution is really, in itſelf, ſo extremely delicate and uncertain, that, when joined to men's paſſions and prejudices, it is impoſſible but different opinions muſt ariſe concerning it, even among perſons of the beſt underſtanding. Thoſe of mild tempers, who love peace and order, and deteſt ſedition and civil wars, will always entertain more favorable ſentiments of monarchy, than men of bold and generous ſpirits, who are paſſionate lovers of liberty, and think no evil comparable to ſubjection and ſlavery. And though all reaſonable men agree in general to preſerve our mixed government; yet, when they come to particulars, ſome will incline to truſt greater powers to the crown, to beſtow on it more influence, and to guard againſt its encroachments with leſs caution, than others who are terrified at the moſt diſtant approaches of tyranny and deſpotic power. Thus are there parties of Principle involved

in the very nature of our conſtitution, which may properly enough be denominated thoſe of Court and Country. The ſtrength and violence of each of theſe parties will much depend upon the particular adminiſtration. An adminiſtration may be ſo bad as to throw a great majority into the oppoſition, as a good adminiſtration will reconcile to the court many of the moſt paſſionate lovers of liberty. But however the nation may fluctuate between them, the parties themſelves will always ſubſiſt, ſo long as we are governed by a limited monarchy.

But, beſides this difference of *Principle*, thoſe parties are very much fomented by a difference of Intereſt, without which they could ſcarcely ever be dangerous or violent. The crown will naturally beſtow all truſt and power upon thoſe whoſe principles, real or pretended, are moſt favorable to monarchical government; and this temptation will naturally engage them to go greater lengths than their principles would otherwiſe carry them. Their antagoniſts, who are diſappointed in their ambitious aims, throw themſelves into the party whoſe ſentiments incline them to be moſt jealous of royal power, and naturally carry thoſe ſentiment to a greater height than ſound politics will juſtify. Thus *Court* and *Country*, which are the genuine offſpring of the Britiſh government, are a kind of mixed parties, and are influenced both by principle and intereſt. The heads of the factions are commonly moſt governed by the latter motive; the inferior members of them by the former.

As to eccleſiaſtical parties, we may obſerve, that,

in all ages of the world, prieſts have been enemies to liberty; and it is certain, that this ſteady conduct of theirs muſt have been founded on fixed reaſons of intereſt and ambition. Liberty of thinking and of expreſſing our thoughts, is always fatal to prieſtly power, and to thoſe pious frauds on which it is commonly founded; and, by an infallible connexion, which prevails among all kinds of liberty, this privilege can never be enjoyed, at leaſt has never yet been enjoyed, but in a free government. Hence it muſt happen, in ſuch a conſtitution as that of Great Britain, that the eſtabliſhed clergy, while things are in their natural ſituation, will always be of the *Court*-party; as, on the contrary, diſſenters of all kinds will be of the *Country*-party; ſince they can never hope for that toleration which they ſtand in need of, but by means of our free government. All princes that have aimed at deſpotic power, have known of what importance it was to gain the eſtabliſhed clergy: As the clergy, on their part, have ſhown a great facility in entering into the views of ſuch princes[z]. Guſtavus Vaza was, perhaps, the only ambitious monarch that ever depreſſed the church, at the ſame time that he diſcouraged liberty. But the exorbitant power of the biſhops in Sweden, who, at that time, overtopped the crown itſelf,

[z] Judæi ſibi ipſi reges impoſuere; qui mobilitate vulgi expulſi, reſumpta per arma dominatione, fugas civium, urbium everſions, fratrum, conjugum, parentum neces, aliaque ſolita regibus auſi, ſuperſtitionem fovebant; quia honor ſacerdotii firmamentum potentiæ aſſumebatur. TACIT. *hiſt. lib.* v.

together with their attachment to a foreign family, was the reaſon of his embracing ſuch an unuſual ſyſtem of politics.

This obſervation, concerning the propenſity of prieſts to the government of a ſingle perſon, is not true with regard to one ſect only. The *Presbyterian* and *Calviniſtic* clergy in Holland were profeſſed friends to the family of Orange; as the *Arminians*, who were eſteemed heretics, were of the Louveſtein faction, and zealous for liberty. But if a prince have the choice of both, it is eaſy to ſee, that he will prefer the epiſcopal to the preſbyterian form of government; both becauſe of the greater affinity between monarchy and epiſcopacy, and becauſe of the facility, which he will find, in ſuch a government, of ruling the clergy, by means of their eccleſiaſtical ſuperior[z].

If we conſider the firſt riſe of parties in England, during the great rebellion, we ſhall obſerve, that it was conformable to this general theory, and that the ſpecies of government gave birth to them, by a regular and infallible operation. The Engliſh conſtitution, before that period, had lain in a kind of confuſion; yet ſo as that the ſubjects poſſeſſed many noble privileges, which, though not exactly bounded and ſecured by law, were univerſally deemed, from long poſſeſſion, to belong to them as their birth-right. An ambitious, or rather a miſguided, prince aroſe, who deemed all theſe privileges to be conceſſions of his predeceſſors, revocable at pleaſure;

[z] Populi imperium juxta libertatem: Paucorum dominatio regiæ libidini proprior eſt. TACIT. *Ann. lib.* vi.

and

and, in profecution of this principle, he openly acted in violation of liberty during the courfe of ſeveral years. Neceſſity at laſt conſtrained him to call a parliament: The ſpirit of liberty aroſe and ſpread itſelf: The prince being without any ſupport, was obliged to grant every thing required of him: And his enemies, jealous and implacable, ſet no bounds to their pretenſions. Here then began thoſe conteſts, in which it was no wonder that men of that age were divided into different parties; ſince, even at this day, the impartial are at a loſs to decide concerning the juſtice of the quarrel. The pretenſions of the parliament, if yielded to, broke the balance of the conſtitution, by rendering the government almoſt entirely republican. If not yielded to, the nation was, perhaps, ſtill in danger of abſolute power, from the ſettled principles and inveterate habits of the king, which had plainly appeared in every conceſſion that he had been conſtrained to make to his people. In this queſtion, ſo delicate and uncertain, men naturally fell to the ſide which was moſt conformable to their uſual principles; and the more paſſionate favorers of monarchy declared for the king, as the zealous friends of liberty ſided with the parliament. The hopes of ſucceſs being nearly equal on both ſides, *intereſt* had no general influence in this conteſt: So that Round-head and Cavalier were merely parties of principle; neither of which diſowned either monarchy or liberty; but the former party inclined moſt to the republican part of our government, the latter to the monarchical. In this reſpect, they

may be conſidered as court and country-party, enflamed into a civil war, by an unhappy concurrence of circumſtances, and by the turbulent ſpirit of the age. The commonwealth's men, and the partiſans of abſolute power, lay concealed in both parties, and formed but an inconſiderable part of them.

The clergy had concurred with the king's arbitrary deſigns; and, in return, were allowed to perſecute their adverſaries, whom they called heretics and ſchiſmatics. The eſtabliſhed clergy were epiſcopal; the non-conformiſts preſbyterian: So that all things concurred to throw the former, without reſerve, into the king's party; and the latter into that of the parliament.

Every one knows the event of this quarrel; fatal to the king firſt, to the parliament afterwards. After many confuſions and revolutions, the royal family was at laſt reſtored, and the ancient government re-eſtabliſhed. Charles II. was not made wiſer by the example of his father; but proſecuted the ſame meaſures, though, at firſt, with more ſecrecy and caution. New parties aroſe, under the appellation of *Whig* and *Tory*, which have continued ever ſince to confound and diſtract our government. To determine the nature of theſe parties is, perhaps, one of the moſt difficult problems that can be met with, and is a proof that hiſtory may contain queſtions, as uncertain as any to be found in the moſt abſtract ſciences. We have ſeen the conduct of the two parties, during the courſe of ſeventy years, in a vaſt variety of circumſtances,

poſſeſſed of power, and deprived of it, during peace and during war: Perſons, who profeſs themſelves of one ſide or other, we meet with every hour, in company, in our pleaſures, in our ſerious occupations: We ourſelves are conſtrained, in a manner, to take party; and living in a country of the higheſt liberty, every one may openly declare all his ſentiments and opinions: Yet are we at a loſs to tell the nature, pretenſions, and principles of the different factions.

When we compare the parties of Whig and Tory with thoſe of Round-head and Cavalier, the moſt obvious difference that appears between them, conſiſts in the principles of *paſſive obedience* and *indefeaſible right*; which were but little heard of among the Cavaliers, but became the univerſal doctrine, and were eſteemed the true characteriſtic, of a Tory. Were theſe principles puſhed into their moſt obvious conſequences, they imply a formal renunciation of all our liberties, and an avowal of abſolute monarchy; ſince nothing can be a greater abſurdity than a limited power, which muſt not be reſiſted, even when it exceeds its limitations. But as the moſt rational principles are often but a weak counterpoiſe to paſſion, it is no wonder that theſe abſurd principles were found too weak for that effect. The Tories, as men, were enemies to oppreſſion; and alſo as Engliſhmen, they were enemies to arbitrary power. Their zeal for liberty was, perhaps, leſs fervent than that of their antagoniſts; but was ſufficient to make them forget all their general principles, when they ſaw themſelves

openly threatened with a ſubverſion of the ancient government. From theſe ſentiments aroſe the *Revolution*: an event of mighty conſequence, and the firmeſt foundation of Britiſh liberty. The conduct of the Tories, during that event, and after it, will afford us a true inſight into the nature of that party.

In the *firſt* place, they appear to have had the genuine ſentiments of Britons in their affection for liberty, and in their determined reſolution not to ſacrifice it to any abſtract principle whatſoever, or to any imaginary rights of princes. This part of their character might juſtly have been doubted of before the *Revolution*, from the obvious tendency of their avowed principles, and from their compliances with a court, which ſeemed to make little ſecret of its arbitrary deſigns. The *Revolution* ſhowed them to have been, in this reſpect, nothing but a genuine *court-party*, ſuch as might be expected in a Britiſh government: That is, *Lovers of liberty, but greater lovers of monarchy.* It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that they carried their monarchical principles farther, even in practice, but more ſo in theory, than was, in any degree, conſiſtent with a limited government.

Secondly, Neither their principles nor affections concurred, entirely or heartily, with the ſettlement made at the *Revolution*, or with that which has ſince taken place. This part of their character may ſeem oppoſite to the former; ſince any other ſettlement, in thoſe circumſtances of the nation, muſt probably have been dangerous, if not fatal

to liberty. But the heart of man is made to reconcile contradiction; and this contradiction is not greater than that between *paſſive obedience* and the *reſiſtance* employed at the *Revolution*. A Tory, therefore, ſince the *Revolution*, may be defined in a few words, to be *a lover of monarchy, though without abandoning liberty; and a partiſan of the family of* Stuart: As a Whig may be defined to be *a lover of liberty, though without renouncing monarchy: and a friend to the ſettlement in the* Proteſtant *line.*

Theſe different views, with regard to the ſettlement of the crown, were accidental, but natural additions to the principles of the *court* and *country*-parties, which are the genuine diviſions in the Britiſh government. A paſſionate lover of monarchy is apt to be diſpleaſed at any change of the ſucceſſion, as ſavouring too much of a commonwealth: A paſſionate lover of liberty is apt to think that every part of the government ought to be ſubordinate to the intereſts of liberty.

Some, who will not venture to aſſert, that the *real* difference between Whig and Tory was loſt at the *Revolution*, ſeem inclined to think, that the difference is now aboliſhed, and that affairs are ſo far returned to their natural ſtate, that there are at preſent no other parties among us but *court* and *country*; that is, men who, by intereſt or principle, are attached either to monarchy or liberty. The Tories have been ſo long obliged to talk in the republican ſtyle, that they ſeem to have made converts of themſelves by their hypocriſy, and to have embraced the ſentiments, as

well as language, of their adverſaries. There are, however, very conſiderable remains of that party in England, with all their old prejudices; and a proof that *court* and *country* are not our only parties, is, that almoſt all the diſſenters ſide with the court, and the lower clergy, at leaſt of the church of England, with the oppoſition. This may convince us that ſome bias ſtill hangs upon our conſtitution, ſome extrinſic weight, which turns it from its natural courſe, and cauſes a confuſion in our parties [1].

ESSAY X.

OF SUPERSTITION AND ENTHUSIASM.

THAT the corruption of the beſt things produces the worſt, is grown into a maxim, and is commonly proved, among other inſtances, by the pernicious effects of *ſuperſtition* and *enthuſiaſm*, the corruptions of true religion.

Theſe two ſpecies of falſe religion, though both pernicious, are yet of a very different, and even of a contrary nature. The mind of man is ſubject to certain unaccountable terrors and apprehenſions, proceeding either from the unhappy ſituation of

[1] Some of the opinions delivered in theſe Eſſays, with regard to the public tranſactions in the laſt century, the Author, on more accurate examination, found reaſon to retract in his *Hiſtory of Great Britain*. And as he would not enſlave himſelf to the ſyſtems of either party, neither would he fetter his judgment by his own preconceived opinions and principles; nor is he aſhamed to acknowlege his miſtakes. Theſe miſtakes were indeed, at that time, almoſt univerſal in this kingdom.

private or public affairs, from ill health, from a gloomy and melancholy diſpoſition, or from the concurrence of all theſe circumſtances. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, infinite unknown evils are dreaded from unknown agents; and where real objects of terror are wanting, the ſoul, active to its own prejudice, and foſtering its predominant inclination, finds imaginary ones, to whoſe power and malevolence it ſets no limits. As theſe enemies are entirely inviſible and unknown, the methods taken to appeaſe them are equally unaccountable, and conſiſt in ceremonies, obſervances, mortifications, ſacrifices, preſents, or in any practice, however abſurd or frivolous, which either folly or knavery recommends to a blind and terrified credulity. Weakneſs, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are, therefore, the true ſources of Superſtition.

But the mind of man is alſo ſubject to an unaccountable elevation and preſumption, ariſing from proſperous ſucceſs, from luxuriant health, from ſtrong ſpirits, or from a bold and confident diſpoſition. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, the imagination ſwells with great, but confuſed conceptions, to which no ſublunary beauties or enjoyments can correſpond. Every thing mortal and periſhable vaniſhes as unworthy of attention. And a full range is given to the fancy in the inviſible regions or world of ſpirits; where the ſoul is at liberty to indulge itſelf in every imagination which may beſt ſuit its preſent taſte and diſpoſition. Hence ariſe raptures, tranſports, and ſurpriſing flights of

fancy; and confidence and preſumption ſtill increaſing theſe, raptures, being altogether unaccountable, and ſeeming quite beyond the reach of our ordinary faculties, are attributed to the immediate inſpiration of that Divine Being, who is the object of devotion. In a little time, the inſpired perſon comes to regard himſelf as a diſtinguiſhed favorite of the Divinity; and when this frenzy once takes place, which is the ſummit of enthuſiaſm, every whimſy is conſecrated: Human reaſon, and even morality, are rejected as fallacious guides: And the fanatic madman delivers himſelf over, blindly and without reſerve, to the ſuppoſed illapſes of the ſpirit, and to inſpiration from above. Hope, pride, preſumption, a warm imagination, together with ignorance, are therefore the true ſources of Enthuſiaſm.

Theſe two ſpecies of falſe religion might afford occaſion to many ſpeculations; but I ſhall confine myſelf, at preſent, to a few reflections concerning their different influence on government and ſociety.

My firſt reflection is. *That ſuperſtition is favorable to prieſtly power, and enthuſiaſm not leſs or rather more contrary to it than ſound reaſon and philoſophy.* As ſuperſtition is founded on fear, ſorrow, and a depreſſion of ſpirits, it repreſents the man to himſelf in ſuch deſpicable colors, that he appears unworthy, in his own eyes, of approaching the Divine preſence, and naturally has recourſe to any other perſon, whoſe ſanctity of life, or perhaps impudence and cunning, have made him be

ſuppoſed more favored by the Divinity. To him the ſuperſtitious intruſt their devotions: To his care they recommend their prayers, petitions, and ſacrifices: And by his means they hope to render their addreſſes acceptable to their incenſed Deity. Hence the origin of Prieſts, who may juſtly be regarded as an invention of a timorous and abject ſuperſtition, which, ever diffident of itſelf, dares not offer up its own devotions, but ignorantly thinks to recommend itſelf to the Divinity by the mediation of his ſuppoſed friends and ſervants. As ſuperſtition is a conſiderable ingredient in almoſt all religions, even the moſt fanatical, there being nothing but philoſophy able entirely to conquer theſe unaccountable terrors; hence it proceeds, that in almoſt every ſect of religion there are prieſts to be found: But the ſtronger mixture there is of ſuperſtition, the higher is the authority of the prieſthood.

On the other hand, it may be obſerved, that all enthuſiaſts have been free from the yoke of eccleſiaſtics, and have expreſſed great independence in their devotion; with a contempt of forms, ceremonies, and traditions. The *Quakers* are the moſt egregious, though, at the ſame time, the moſt innocent enthuſiaſts that have yet been known; and are, perhaps, the only ſect that have never admitted prieſts amongſt them. The *Independents*, of all the Engliſh ſectaries, approach neareſt to the *Quakers* in fanaticiſm, and in their freedom from prieſtly bondage. The *preſbyterians* follow after, at an equal diſtance in both particu-

lars. In ſhort, this obſervation is founded in experience; and will alſo appear to be founded in reaſon, if we conſider, that, as enthuſiaſm ariſes from a preſumptuous pride and confidence, it thinks itſelf ſufficiently qualified to *approach* the Divinity without any human mediator. Its rapturous devotions are ſo fervent, that it even imagines itſelf *actually* to *approach* him by the way of contemplation and inward converſe; which makes it neglect all thoſe outward ceremonies and obſervances, to which the aſſiſtance of the prieſts appears ſo requiſite in the eyes of their ſuperſtitious votaries. The fanatic conſecrates himſelf, and beſtows on his own perſon a ſacred character, much ſuperior to what forms and ceremonious inſtitutions can confer on any other.

My *ſecond* reflection with regard to theſe ſpecies of falſe religion is, *That religions, which partake of enthuſiaſm, are, on their firſt riſe, more furious and violent than thoſe which partake of ſuperſtition; but in a little time become more gentle and moderate.* The violence of this ſpecies of religion, when excited by novelty, and animated by oppoſition, appears from numberleſs inſtances; of the *Anabaptiſts* in Germany, the *Camiſars* in France, the *Levellers* and other fanatics in England, and the *Covenanters* in Scotland. Enthuſiaſm being founded on ſtrong ſpirits, and a preſumptuous boldneſs of character, it naturally begets the moſt extreme reſolutions; eſpecially after it riſes to that height as to inſpire the deluded fanatic with the opinion of divine illuminations, and with a contempt for

the common rules of reaſon, morality, and prudence.

It is thus enthuſiaſm produces the moſt cruel diſorders in human ſociety; but its fury is like that of thunder and tempeſt, which exhauſt themſelves in a little time, and leave the air more calm and ſerene than before. When the firſt fire of enthuſiaſm is ſpent, men naturally, in all fanatical ſects, ſink into the greateſt remiſſneſs and coolneſs in ſacred matters; there being no body of men among them, endowed with ſufficient authority, whoſe intereſt is concerned to ſupport the religious ſpirit: No rites, no ceremonies, no holy obſervances, which may enter into the common train of life, and preſerve the ſacred principles from oblivion. Superſtition, on the contrary, ſteals in gradually and inſenſibly; renders men tame and ſubmiſſive; is acceptable to the magiſtrate, and ſeems inoffenſive to the people: Till at laſt the prieſt, having firmly eſtabliſhed his authority, becomes the tyrant and diſturber of human ſociety, by his endleſs contentions, perſecutions, and religious wars. How ſmoothly did the Romiſh church advance in her acquiſition of power? But into what diſmal convulſions did ſhe throw all Europe, in order to maintain it? On the other hand, our ſectaries, who were formerly ſuch dangerous bigots, are now become very free reaſoners; and the *Quakers* ſeem to approach nearly the only regular body of *Deiſts* in the univerſe, the *Literati*, or the diſciples of Confucius in China [1].

[1] The Chineſe Literati have no prieſts or eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment.

My *third* obſervation on this head is, *That ſuperſtition is an enemy to civil liberty, and enthuſiaſm a friend to it.* As ſuperſtition groans under the dominion of prieſts, and enthuſiaſm is deſtructive of all eccleſiaſtical power, this ſufficiently accounts for the preſent obſervation. Not to mention, that enthuſiaſm, being the infirmity of bold and ambitious tempers, is naturally accompanied with a ſpirit of liberty; as ſuperſtition, on the contrary, renders men tame and abject, and fits them for ſlavery. We learn from Engliſh hiſtory, that during the civil wars, the *Independents* and *Deiſts*, though the moſt oppoſite in their religious principles; yet were united in their political ones, and were alike paſſionate for a commonwealth. And ſince the origin of *Whig* and *Tory*, the leaders of the *Whigs* have either been *Deiſts* or profeſt *Latitudinarians* in their principles; that is, friends to toleration, and indifferent to any particular ſect of *Chriſtians:* While the ſectaries, who have all a ſtrong tincture of enthuſiaſm, have always, without exception, concurred with that party in defence of civil liberty. The reſemblance in their ſuperſtitions long united the high-church *Tories* and the *Roman Catholics*, in ſupport of prerogative and kingly power; though experience of the tolerating ſpirit of the *Whigs* ſeems of late to have reconciled the *Catholics* to that party.

The *Moliniſts* and *Janſeniſts* in France have a thouſand unintelligible diſputes, which are not worthy the reflection of a man of ſenſe: But what principally diſtinguiſhes theſe two ſects, and alone

merits attention, is the different ſpirit of their religion. The *Moliniſts* conducted by the *Jeſuits*; are great friends to ſuperſtition, rigid obſervers of external forms and ceremonies, and devoted to the authority of the prieſts, and to tradition. The *Janſeniſts* are enthuſiaſts, and zealous promoters of the paſſionate devotion, and of the inward life, little influenced by authority; and, in a word, but half Catholics. The conſequences are exactly conformable to the foregoing reaſoning. The *Jeſuits* are the tyrants of the people, and the ſlaves of the court: And the *Janſeniſts* preſerve alive the ſmall ſparks of the love of liberty, which are to be found in the French nation.

ESSAY XI.

OF THE DIGNITY OR MEANNESS OF HUMAN NATURE.

THERE are certain ſects which ſecretly form themſelves in the learned world, as well as factions in the political; and though ſometimes they come not to an open rupture, they give a different turn to the ways of thinking of thoſe who have taken part on either ſide. The moſt remarkable of this kind are the ſects founded on the different ſentiments with regard to the *dignity of human nature*; which is a point that ſeems to have divided philoſophers and poets, as well as divines, from the beginning of the world to this day. Some exalt

our ſpecies to the ſkies, and repreſent man as a kind of human demigod, who derives his origin from heaven, and retains evident marks of his lineage and deſcent. Others inſiſt upon the blind ſides of human nature, and can diſcover nothing, except vanity, in which man ſurpaſſes the other animals, whom he affects ſo much to deſpiſe. If an author poſſeſs the talent of rhetoric and declamation, he commonly takes part with the former; If his turn lie towards irony and ridicule, he naturally throws himſelf into the other extreme.

I am far from thinking that all thoſe who have depreciated our ſpecies have been enemies to virtue, and have expoſed the frailties of their fellow-creatures with any bad intention. On the contrary; I am ſenſible that a delicate ſenſe of morals eſpecially when attended with a ſplenetic temper, is apt to give a man a diſguſt of the world, and to make him conſider the common courſe of human affairs with too much indignation. I muſt, however, be of opinion, that the ſentiments of thoſe who are inclined to think favorably of mankind, are more advantageous to virtue than the contrary principles, which give us a mean opinion of our nature. When a man is prepoſſeſſed with a high notion of his rank and character in the creation, he will naturally endeavour to act up to it, and will ſcorn to do a baſe or vicious action, which might ſink him below that figure which he makes in his own imagination. Accordingly we find, that all our polite and faſhionable moraliſts inſiſt upon this topic, and endeavour to

repreſent vice as unworthy of man, as well as odious in itſelf.

We find few diſputes that are not founded on ſome ambiguity in the expreſſion; and I am perſuaded, that the preſent diſpute, concerning the dignity or meanneſs of human nature, is not more exempt from it than any other. It may therefore be worth while to conſider, what is real, and what is only verbal, in this controverſy.

That there is a natural difference between merit and demerit, virtue and vice, wiſdom and folly, no reaſonable man will deny: Yet it is evident, that in affixing the term which denotes either our approbation or blame, we are commonly more influenced by compariſon than by any fixed unalterable ſtandard in the nature of things. In like manner, quantity, and extenſion, and bulk, are by every one acknowledged to be real things: But when we call any animal *great* or *little*, we always form a ſecret compariſon between that animal and others of the ſame ſpecies; and it is that compariſon which regulates our judgment concerning its greatneſs. A dog and a horſe may be of the very ſame ſize, while the one is admired for the greatneſs of its bulk, and the other for the ſmallneſs. When I am preſent, therefore, at any diſpute, I always conſider with myſelf, whether it be a queſtion of compariſon or not that is the ſubject of the controverſy; and if it be, whether the diſputants compare the ſame objects together, or talk of things that are widely different.

In forming our notions of human nature, we

are apt to make a compariſon between men and animals, the only creatures endowed with thought that fall under our ſenſes. Certainly this compariſon is favorable to mankind. On the one hand, we ſee a creature, whoſe thoughts are not limited by any narrow bounds, either of place or time; who carries his reſearches into the moſt diſtant regions of this globe, and beyond this globe, to the planets and heavenly bodies; looks backward to conſider the firſt origin, at leaſt, the hiſtory of human race; caſts his eye forward to ſee the influence of his actions upon poſterity, and the judgements which will be formed of his character a thouſand years hence; a creature, who traces cauſes and effects to a great length and intricacy; extracts general principles from particular appearances; improves upon his diſcoveries; corrects his miſtakes; and makes his very errors profitable. On the other hand, we are preſented with a creature the very reverſe of this; limited in its obſervations and reaſonings to a few ſenſible objects which ſurround it; without curioſity, without foreſight; blindly conducted by inſtinct, and attaining, in a ſhort time, its utmoſt perfection, beyond which it is never able to advance a ſingle ſtep. What a wide difference is there between theſe creatures! And how exalted a notion muſt we entertain of the former, in compariſon of the latter!

There are two means commonly employed to deſtroy this concluſion: *Firſt*, By making an unfair repreſentation of the caſe, and inſiſting only upon the weakneſſes of human nature. And *ſecondly*, By

By forming a new and ſecret compariſon between man and beings of the moſt perfect wiſdom. Among the other excellencies of man, this is one, that he can form an idea of perfections much beyond what he has experience of in himſelf; and is not limited in his conception of wiſdom and virtue. He can eaſily exalt his notions, and conceive a degree of knowledge, which, when compared to his own, will make the latter appear very contemptible, and will cauſe the difference between that and the ſagacity of animals, in a manner, to diſappear and vaniſh. Now this being a point in which all the world is agreed, that human underſtanding falls infinitely ſhort of perfect wiſdom, it is proper we ſhould know when this compariſon takes place, that we may not diſpute where there is no real difference in our ſentiments. Man falls much more ſhort of perfect wiſdom, and even of his own ideas of perfect wiſdom, than animals do of man; yet the latter difference is ſo conſiderable, that nothing but a compariſon with the former can make it appear of little moment.

It is alſo uſual to *compare* one man with another; and finding very few whom we can call *wiſe* or *virtuous*, we are apt to entertain a contemptible notion of our ſpecies in general. That we may be ſenſible of the fallacy of this way of reaſoning, we may obſerve, that the honorable appellations of wiſe and virtuous, are not annexed to any particular degree of thoſe qualities of *wiſdom* and *virtue;* but ariſe altogether from the compariſon we make between one man and another. When we

find a man, who arrives at ſuch a pitch of wiſdom as is very uncommon, we pronounce him a wiſe man: So that to ſay, there are few wiſe men in the world, is really to ſay nothing; ſince it is only by their ſcarcity that they merit that appellation. Were the loweſt of our ſpecies as wiſe as Tully or lord Bacon, we ſhould ſtill have reaſon to ſay that there are few wiſe men. For in that caſe we ſhould exalt our notions of wiſdom, and ſhould not pay a ſingular honor to any one who was not ſingularly diſtinguiſhed by his talents. In like manner, I have heard it obſerved by thoughtleſs people, that there are few women poſſeſſed of beauty, in compariſon of thoſe who want it; not conſidering, that we beſtow the epithet of *beautiful* only on ſuch as poſſeſs a degree of beauty that is common to them with a few. The ſame degree of beauty in a woman is called deformity, which is treated as real beauty in one of our ſex.

As it is uſual, in forming a notion of our ſpecies, to *compare* it with the other ſpecies above or below it, or to compare the individuals of the ſpecies among themſelves; ſo we often compare together the different motives or actuating principles of human nature, in order to regulate our judgement concerning it. And, indeed, this is the only kind of compariſon which is worth our attention, or decides any thing in the preſent queſtion. Were our ſelfiſh and vicious principles ſo much predominant above our ſocial and virtuous as is aſſerted by ſome philoſophers, we ought undoubtedly to entertain a contemptible notion of human nature.

There is much of a diſpute of words in all this controverſy. When a man denies the ſincerity of all public ſpirit or affection to a country and community, I am at a loſs what to think of him. Perhaps he never felt this paſſion in ſo clear and diſtinct a manner as to remove all his doubts concerning its force and reality. But when he proceeds afterwards to reject all private friendſhip, if no intereſt or ſelf-love intermix itſelf, I am then confident that he abuſes terms, and confounds the ideas of things; ſince it is impoſſible for any one to be ſo ſelfiſh, or rather ſo ſtupid, as to make no difference between one man and another, and give no preference to qualities, which engage his approbation and eſteem. Is he alſo, ſay I, as inſenſible to anger as he pretends to be to friendſhip? And does injury and wrong no more affect him than kindneſs or benefits? Impoſſible: He does not know himſelf: He has forgotten the movements of his heart; or rather he makes uſe of a different language from the reſt of his countrymen, and calls not things by their proper names. What ſay you of natural affection? (I ſubjoin) Is that alſo a ſpecies of ſelf-love? Yes: All is ſelf-love. *Your* children are loved only becauſe they are yours: *Your* friend for a like reaſon; And *your* country engages you only ſo far as it has a connexion with *yourſelf*: Were the idea of ſelf removed, nothing would affect you: You would be altogether unactive and inſenſible: Or, if you ever gave yourſelf any movement, it would only be from vanity, and a deſire of fame and reputation

to this ſame ſelf. I am willing, reply I, to receive your interpretation of human actions, provided you admit the facts. That ſpecies of ſelf-love, which diſplays itſelf in kindneſs to others, you muſt allow to have great influence over human actions, and even greater, on many occaſions, than that which remains in its original ſhape and form. For how few are there, who, having a family, children, and relations, do not ſpend more on the maintenance and education of theſe than on their own pleaſures? This indeed, you juſtly obſerve, may proceed from their ſelf-love, ſince the proſperity of their family and friends is one, or the chief, of their pleaſures, as well as their chief honor. Be you alſo one of theſe ſelfiſh men, and you are ſure of every one's good opinion and good will; or, not to ſhock your ears with theſe expreſſions, the ſelf-love of every one, and mine among the reſt, will then incline us to ſerve you, and ſpeak well of you.

In my opinion, there are two things which have led aſtray thoſe philoſophers that have inſiſted ſo much on the ſelfiſhneſs of man. In the *firſt* place, they found, that every act of virtue or friendſhip was attended with a ſecret pleaſure; whence they concluded, that friendſhip and virtue could not be diſintereſted. But the fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous ſentiment or paſſion produces the pleaſure, and does not ariſe from it. I feel a pleaſure in doing good to my friend, becauſe I love him; but do not love him for the ſake of that pleaſure.

In the *ſecond* place, it has always been found, that the virtuous are far from being indifferent to praiſe; and therefore they have been repreſented as a ſet of vain-glorious men, who had nothing in view but the applauſes of others. But this alſo is a fallacy. It is very unjuſt in the world, when they find any tincture of vanity in a laudable action, to depreciate it upon that account, or aſcribe it entirely to that motive. The caſe is not the ſame with vanity as with other paſſions. Where avarice or revenge enters into any ſeemingly virtuous action, it is difficult for us to determine how far it enters, and it is natural to ſuppoſe it the ſole actuating principle. But vanity is ſo cloſely allied to virtue, and to love the fame of laudable actions approaches ſo near the love of laudable actions for their own ſake, that theſe paſſions are more capable of mixture than any other kinds of affection, and it is almoſt impoſſible to have the latter without ſome degree of the former. Accordingly we find, that this paſſion for glory is always warped and varied according to the particular taſte or diſpoſition of the mind on which it falls. Nero had the ſame vanity in driving a chariot that Trajan had in governing the empire with juſtice and ability. To love the glory of virtuous deeds is a ſure proof of the love of virtue.

ESSAY XII.

OF CIVIL LIBERTY.

THOSE who employ their pens on political ſubjects, free from party-rage and party-prejudices, cultivate a ſcience, which, of all others, contributes moſt to public utility, and even to the private ſatisfaction of thoſe who addict themſelves to the ſtudy of it. I am apt, however, to entertain a ſuſpicion, that the world is ſtill too young to fix many general truths in politics, which will remain true to the lateſt poſterity. We have not as yet had experience of three thouſand years; ſo that not only the art of reaſoning is ſtill imperfect in this ſcience, as in all others, but we even want ſufficient materials upon which we can reaſon. It is not fully known, what degree of refinement, either in virtue or vice, human nature is ſuſceptible of; nor what may be expected of mankind from any great revolution in their education, cuſtoms, or principles. Machiavel was certainly a great genius; but having confined his ſtudy to the furious and tyrannical governments of ancient times, or to the little diſorderly principalities of Italy, his reaſonings, eſpecially upon monarchical government, have been found extremely defective; and there ſcarcely is any maxim in his *Prince*, which ſubſequent experience has not entirely refuted. *A weak prince*, ſays he, *is incapable of receiving good counſel; for if he conſult with ſeveral, he will not*

be able to chuſe among their different counſels. If he abandon himſelf to one, that miniſter may, perhaps, have capacity; but he will not long be a miniſter: He will be ſure to diſpoſſeſs his maſter, and place himſelf and his family upon the throne. I mention this among many inſtances of the errors of that politician, proceeding in a great meaſure from his having lived in too early an age of the world to be a good judge of political truth. Almoſt all the princes of Europe are at preſent governed by their miniſters, and have been ſo for near two centuries; and yet no ſuch event has ever happened, or can poſſibly happen. Sejanus might protect dethroning the Cæſars; but Fleury, though ever ſo vicious, could not, while in his ſenſes, entertain the leaſt hopes of diſpoſſeſſing the Bourbons.

Trade was never eſteemed an affair of ſtate till the laſt century; and there ſcarcely is any ancient writer on politics who has made mention of it[1]. Even the Italians have kept a profound ſilence with regard to it, though it has now engaged the chief attention, as well of miniſters of ſtate as of ſpeculative reaſoners. The great opulence, grandeur, and military achievements of the two maritime powers, ſeem firſt to have inſtructed mankind in the importance of an extenſive commerce.

Having, therefore, intended in this eſſay to

[1] Xenophon mentions it; but with a doubt if it be of any advantage to a ſtate. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐμπορία ὠφελεῖ τὶ πόλιν, &c. Xen. Hiero. Plato totally excludes it from his imaginary republic. De legibus, lib. iv.

make a full compariſon of civil liberty and abſolute government, and to ſhow the great advantages of the former above the latter, I began to entertain a ſuſpicion, that no man in this age was ſufficiently qualified for ſuch an undertaking; and that whatever any one ſhould advance on that head, would, in all probability, be refuted by further experience, and be rejected by poſterity. Such mighty revolutions have happened in human affairs, and ſo many events have ariſen contrary to the expectation of the ancients, that they are ſufficient to beget the ſuſpicion of ſtill further changes.

It had been obſerved by the ancients, that all the arts and ſciences aroſe among free nations; and that the Perſians and Egyptians, notwithſtanding their eaſe, opulence, and luxury, made but faint efforts towards a reliſh in thoſe finer pleaſures, which were carried to ſuch perfection by the Greeks, amidſt continual wars, attended with poverty, and the greateſt ſimplicity of life and manners. It had alſo been obſerved, that when the Greeks loſt their liberty, though they increaſed mightily in riches, by means of the conqueſts of Alexander; yet the arts, from that moment, declined among them, and have never ſince been able to raiſe their head in that climate. Learning was tranſplanted to Rome, the only free nation at that time in the univerſe; and having met with ſo favorable a ſoil, it made prodigious ſhoots for above a century; till the decay of liberty produced alſo the decay of letters, and ſpread a total barbariſm over the world. From theſe two experiments,

of which each was double in its kind, and ſhowed the fall of learning in abſolute governments, as well as its riſe in popular ones, Longinus thought himſelf ſufficiently juſtified in aſſerting, that the arts and ſciences could never flouriſh but in a free government: And in this opinion he has been followed by ſeveral eminent writers [2] in our own country, who either confined their view merely to ancient facts, or entertained too great a partiality in favor of that form of government eſtabliſhed amongſt us.

But what would theſe writers have ſaid to the inſtances of modern Rome and of Florence? Of which the former carried to perfection all the finer arts of ſculpture, painting, and muſic, as well as poetry, though it groaned under tyranny, and under the tyranny of prieſts; while the latter made its chief progreſs in the arts and ſciences after it began to loſe its liberty by the uſurpation of the family of Medici. Arioſto, Taſſo, Galileo, more than Raphael and Michael Angelo, were not born in republics. And though the Lombard ſchool was famous as well as the Roman, yet the Venetians have had the ſmalleſt ſhare in its honors, and ſeem rather inferior to the other Italians in their genius for the arts and ſciences. Rubens eſtabliſhed his ſchool at Antwerp, not at Amſterdam: Dreſden, not Hamburgh, is the centre of politeneſs in Germany.

But the moſt eminent inſtance of the flouriſhing

[2] Mr. Addiſon and Lord Shaftesbury.

of learning in abſolute governments is that of France, which ſcarcely ever enjoyed any eſtabliſhed liberty, and yet has carried the arts and ſciences as near perfection as any other nation. The Engliſh are perhaps greater philoſophers; the Italians better painters and muſicians; the Romans were greater orators: But the French are the only people, except the Greeks, who have been at once philoſophers, poets, orators, hiſtorians, painters, architects, ſculptors, and muſicians. With regard to the ſtage, they have excelled even the Greeks, who far excelled the Engliſh; and, in common life, they have in a great meaſure perfected that art, the moſt uſeful and agreeable of any, *l'Art de Vivre*, the art of ſociety and converſation.

If we conſider the ſtate of the ſciences and polite arts in our own country, Horace's obſervation with regard to the Romans may in a great meaſure be applied to the Britiſh.

— *Sed in longum tamen ævum*
Manſerunt, hodieque manent veſtigia ruris.

The elegance and propriety of ſtyle have been very much neglected among us. We have no dictionary of our language, and ſcarcely a tolerable grammar. The firſt polite proſe we have was writ by a man who is ſtill alive [1]. As to Sprat, Locke, and even Temple, they knew too little of the rules of art to be eſteemed elegant writers. The proſe of Bacon, Harrington, and Milton, is alto-

[1] Dr. Swift.

gether ſtiff and pedantic, though their ſenſe be excellent. Men in this country have been ſo much occupied in the great diſputes of *Religion*, *Politics*, and *Philoſophy*, that they had no reliſh for the ſeemingly minute obſervations of grammar and criticiſm. And though this turn of thinking muſt have conſiderably improved our ſenſe and our talent of reaſoning, it muſt be confeſſed, that, even in thoſe ſciences above mentioned, we have not any ſtandard-book which we can tranſmit to poſterity: and the utmoſt we have to boaſt of are a few eſſays towards a more juſt philoſophy; which indeed promiſe well, but have not as yet reached any degree of perfection.

It has become an eſtabliſhed opinion, that commerce can never flouriſh but in a free government; and this opinion ſeems to be founded on a longer and larger experience than the foregoing with regard to the arts and ſciences. If we trace commerce in its progreſs through Tyre, Athens, Syracuſe, Carthage, Venice, Florence, Genoa, Antwerp, Holland, England, &c. we ſhall always, find it to have fixed its ſeat in free governments. The three greateſt trading-towns now in Europe are London, Amſterdam, and Hamburgh; all free cities, and proteſtant cities, that is, enjoying a double liberty. It muſt, however, be obſerved that the great jealouſy entertained of late with regard to the commerce of France, ſeems to prove that this maxim is no more certain and infallible than the foregoing, and that the ſubjects of an abſolute prince may become our rivals in commerce as well as in learning.

Durſt I deliver my opinion in an affair of ſo much uncertainty, I would aſſert, that, notwithſtanding the efforts of the French, there is ſomething hurtful to commerce inherent in the very nature of abſolute government, and inſeparable from it; though the reaſon I ſhould aſſign for this opinion is ſomewhat different from that which is commonly inſiſted on. Private property ſeems to me almoſt as ſecure in a civilized European monarchy as in a republic; nor is danger much apprehended in ſuch a government from the violence of the ſovereign, more than we commonly dread harm from thunder or earthquakes, or any accident the moſt unuſual and extraordinary. Avarice, the ſpur of induſtry, is ſo obſtinate a paſſion, and works its way through ſo many real dangers and difficulties, that it is not likely to be ſcared by any imaginary danger, which is ſo ſmall, that it ſcarcely admits of calculation. Commerce, therefore, in my opinion, is apt to decay in abſolute governments, not becauſe it is there leſs *ſecure*, but becauſe it is leſs *honorable*. A ſubordination of ranks is abſolutely neceſſary to the ſupport of monarchy. Birth, titles, and place, muſt be honored above induſtry and riches. And while theſe notions prevail, all the conſiderable traders will be tempted to throw up their commerce, in order to purchaſe ſome of thoſe employments to which privileges and honors are annexed.

Since I am upon this head, of the alterations which time has produced or may produce in politics, I muſt obſerve, that all kinds

of government, free and abſolute, ſeem to have undergone, in modern times, a great change for the better, with regard both to foreign and domeſtic management. The *balance of power* is a ſecret in politics fully known only to the preſent age; and I muſt add, that the internal Police of ſtates has alſo received great improvements within the laſt century. We are informed by Salluſt, that Catiline's army was much augmented by the acceſſion of the highwaymen about Rome; though I believe, that all of that profeſſion, who are at preſent diſperſed over Europe, would not amount to a regiment. In Cicero's pleadings for Milo, I find this argument, among others, made uſe of to prove that his client had not aſſaſſinated Clodius. Had Milo, ſaid he, intended to have killed Clodius, he had not attacked him in the daytime, and at ſuch a diſtance from the city: He had waylaid him at night near the ſuburbs, where it might have been pretended that he was killed by robbers; and the frequency of the accident would have favored the deceit. This is a ſurpriſing proof of the looſe policy of Rome, and of the number and force of theſe robbers; ſince Clodius * was at that time attended by thirty ſlaves, who were completely armed, and ſufficiently accuſtomed to blood and danger in the frequent tumults excited by that ſeditious tribune.

But though all kinds of government be improved in modern times, yet monarchical government

* *Vide Aſc. Ped. in Orat. pro Milone.*

ſeems to have made the greateſt advances towards perfection. It may now be affirmed of civilized monarchies, what was formerly ſaid in praiſe of republics alone, *that they are a government of Laws, not of Men.* They are found ſuſceptible of order, method, and conſtancy, to a ſurpriſing degree. Property is there ſecure; induſtry encouraged; the arts flouriſh; and the prince lives ſecure among his ſubjects, like a father among his children. There are perhaps, and have been for two centuries, near two hundred abſolute princes, great and ſmall, in Europe; and, allowing twenty years to each reign, we may ſuppoſe, that there have been in the whole two thouſand monarchs or tyrants, as the Greeks would have called them: Yet of theſe there has not been one, not even Philip II. of Spain, ſo bad as Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, or Domitian, who were four in twelve amongſt the Roman emperors. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, though monarchical governments have approached nearer to popular ones in gentleneſs and ſtability, they are ſtill inferior. Our modern education and cuſtoms inſtil more humanity and moderation than the ancient; but have not as yet been able to overcome entirely the diſadvantages of that form of government.

But here I muſt beg leave to advance a conjecture, which ſeems probable, but which poſterity alone can fully judge of. I am apt to think, that in monarchical governments there is a ſource of improvement, and in popular governments a ſource of degeneracy, which in time will bring theſe ſpe-

cies of civil polity ſtill nearer an equality. The greateſt abuſes which ariſe in France, the moſt perfect model of pure monarchy, proceed not from the number or weight of the taxes beyond what are to be met with in free countries; but from the expenſive, unequal, arbitrary, and intricate method of levying them, by which the induſtry of the poor, eſpecially of the peaſants and farmers, is in a great meaſure diſcouraged, and agriculture rendered a beggarly and ſlaviſh employment. But to whoſe advantage do theſe abuſes tend? If to that of the nobility, they might be eſteemed inherent in that form of government, ſince the nobility are the true ſupports of monarchy; and it is natural their intereſt ſhould be more conſulted, in ſuch a conſtitution, than that of the people. But the nobility are in reality the chief loſers by this oppreſſion, ſince it ruins their eſtates and beggars their tenants. The only gainers by it are the *Finançiers*, a race of men rather odious to the nobility and the whole kingdom. If a prince or miniſter, therefore, ſhould ariſe, endowed with ſufficient diſcernment to know his own and the public intereſt, and with ſufficient force of mind to break through ancient cuſtoms, we might expect to ſee theſe abuſes remedied; in which caſe, the difference between that abſolute government and our free one would not appear ſo conſiderable as at preſent.

The ſource of degeneracy which may be remarked in free governments, conſiſts in the practice of contracting debt and mortgaging the public

revenues, by which taxes may in time become altogether intolerable, and all the property of the ſtate be brought into the hands of the public. This practice is of modern date. The Athenians, though governed by a republic, paid near two hundred *per cent.* for thoſe ſums of money which any emergence made it neceſſary for them to borrow, as we learn from Xenophon [5]. Among the moderns, the Dutch firſt introduced the practice of borrowing great ſums at low intereſt, and have well nigh ruined themſelves by it. Abſolute princes have alſo contracted debt; but as an abſolute prince may make a bankruptcy when he pleaſes, his people can never be oppreſſed by his debts. In popular governments, the people, and chiefly thoſe who have the higheſt offices, being commonly the public creditors, it is difficult for the ſtate to make uſe of this remedy, which, however it may ſometimes be neceſſary, is always cruel and barbarous. This therefore ſeems to be an inconvenience which nearly threatens all free governments, eſpecially our own, at the preſent juncture of affairs. And what a ſtrong motive is this to increaſe our frugality of public money; leſt, for want of it, we be reduced, by the multiplicity of taxes, or, what is worſe, by our public impotence and inability for defence, to curſe our very liberty, and wiſh ourſelves in the ſame ſtate of ſervitude with all the nations that ſurround us?

[5] Κτησιν δε απ' ουδενος αν ουτω καλην κτησαιντο ωσπερ αφ ου αν προτελεσωσιν εις την αφορμην — οι δε γε πλειστοι Αθηναιων πλειονα ληψονται κατ' ενιαυτυν ηοσα ον εισενεγκοσιη, οι γαρ μναν προτελεσαντες, εγγυς δυοιν μναιν προσοδον εξουσι — ο δοκει των ανθρωπινων ασφαλεστατον τε και πολυχρονιωτατον ειναι. ΞΕΝ. ΠΟΡΟΙ.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

OF ELOQUENCE.

THOSE who conſider the periods and revolutions of human kind, as repreſented in hiſtory, are entertained with a ſpectacle full of pleaſure and variety, and ſee with ſurpriſe the manners, cuſtoms, and opinions of the ſame ſpecies ſuſceptible of ſuch prodigious changes in different periods of time. It may, however, be obſerved, that in *civil* hiſtory there is found a much greater uniformity than in the hiſtory of learning and ſcience, and that the wars, negociations, and politics of one age, reſemble more thoſe of another, than the taſte, wit, and ſpeculative principles. Intereſt and ambition, honor and ſhame friendſhip and enmity, gratitude and revenge, are the prime movers in all public tranſactions; and theſe paſſions are of a very ſtubborn and intractable nature, in compariſon of the ſentiments and underſtanding, which are eaſily varied by education and example. The Goths were much more inferior to the Romans in taſte and ſcience than in courage and virtue.

But, not to compare together nations ſo widely different, it may be obſerved, that even this later period of human learning is in many reſpects of an oppoſite character to the ancient; and that if we be ſuperior in philoſophy, we are ſtill, notwithſtanding all our refinements, much inferior in eloquence.

In ancient times, no work of genius was thought to require ſo great parts and capacity, as the ſpeaking in public; and ſome eminent writers have pronounced the talents, even of a great poet or philoſopher, to be of an inferior nature to thoſe which are requiſite for ſuch an undertaking. Greece and Rome produced, each of them, but one accompliſhed orator; and whatever praiſes the other celebrated ſpeakers might merit, they were ſtill eſteemed much inferior to theſe great models of eloquence. It is obſervable, that the ancient critics could ſcarcely find two orators in any age, who deſerved to be placed preciſely in the ſame rank, and poſſeſſed the ſame degree of merit. Calvus, Cælius, Curio, Hortenſius, Cæſar, roſe one above another: But the greateſt of that age was inferior to Cicero, the moſt eloquent ſpeaker that had ever appeared in Rome. Thoſe of fine taſte, however, pronounced this judgment of the Roman orator, as well as of the Grecian, that both of them ſurpaſſed in eloquence all that had ever appeared, but that they were far from reaching the perfection of their art, which was infinite, and not only exceeded human force to attain, but human imagination to conceive. Cicero declares himſelf diſſatisfied with his own performances; nay, even with thoſe of Demoſthenes. *Ita ſunt avidæ & capaces meæ aures*, ſays he, *& ſemper aliquid immenſum, infinitumque deſiderant.*

Of all the polite and learned nations, England alone poſſeſſes a popular government, or admits

into the legiſlature ſuch numerous aſſemblies as can be ſuppoſed to lie under the dominion of eloquence. But what has England to boaſt of in this particular? In enumerating the great men who have done honor to our country, we exult in our poets and philoſophers; but what orators are ever mentioned? Or where are the monuments of their genius to be met with? There are found, indeed, in our hiſtories, the names of ſeveral who directed the reſolutions of our parliament: But neither themſelves nor others have taken the pains to preſerve their ſpeeches; and the authority which they poſſeſſed ſeems to have been owing to their experience, wiſdom, or power, more than to their talents for oratory. At preſent there are above half a dozen ſpeakers in the two houſes, who, in the judgment of the public, have reached very near the ſame pitch of eloquence; and no man pretends to give any one the preference above the reſt. This ſeems to me a certain proof, that none of them have attained much beyond a mediocrity in their art, and that the ſpecies of eloquence which they aſpire to, gives no exerciſe to the ſublimer faculties of the mind, but may be reached by ordinary talents and a ſlight application. A hundred cabinet-makers in London can work a table or a chair equally well; but no one poet can write verſes with ſuch ſpirit and elegance as Mr. Pope.

We are told, that when Demoſthenes was to plead, all ingenious men flocked to Athens from the moſt remote parts of Greece, as to the moſt

celebrated ſpectacle of the world [1]. At London you may ſee men ſauntering in the court of requeſts, while the moſt important debate is carrying on in the two houſes; and many do not think themſelves ſufficiently compenſated, for the loſing of their dinners, by all the eloquence of our moſt celebrated ſpeakers. When old Cibber is to act, the curioſity of ſeveral is more excited than when our prime miniſter is to defend himſelf from a motion for his removal or impeachment.

Even a perſon unacquainted with the noble remains of ancient orators, may judge, from a few ſtrokes, that the ſtyle or ſpecies of their eloquence was infinitely more ſublime than that which modern orators aſpire to. How abſurd would it appear, in our temperate and calm ſpeakers to make uſe of an *Apoſtrophe*, like that noble one of Demoſthenes ſo much celebrated by Quintilian and Longinus, when juſtifying the unſucceſsful battle of Chæronea, he breaks out, *No, my Fellow-Citizens, No: You have not erred. I ſwear by the* manes *of thoſe heroes who fought for the ſame cauſe in the plains of Marathon and Platæa.* Who could now endure ſuch a bold and poetical figure as that which Cicero employs, after deſcribing in the moſt tragical terms the crucifixion of a Roman citizen:

[1] Ne illud quidem intelligunt, non modo ita memoriæ proditum eſſe, ſed ita neceſſe fuiſſe, cum Demoſthenes dicturus eſſet, ut concurſus, audiendi cauſa, ex tota Grecia fierent. At cum iſti Attici dicunt, non modo a corona (quod eſt ipſum miſerabile) ſed etiam ab advocatis relinquuntur.
Cicero de Claris Oratoribus.

Should I paint the horrors of this ſcene, not to Roman *citizens, not to the allies of our ſtate, not to thoſe who have ever heard of the* Roman *Name, not even to men, but to brute creatures; or, to go farther, ſhould I lift up my voice in the moſt deſolate ſolitude to the rocks and mountains, yet ſhould I ſurely ſee thoſe rude and inanimate parts of nature moved with horror and indignation at the recital of ſo enormous an action* [2]. With what a blaze of eloquence muſt ſuch a ſentence be ſurrounded to give it grace, or cauſe it to make any impreſſion on the hearers? And what noble art and ſublime talents are requiſite to arrive, by juſt degrees, at a ſentiment ſo bold and exceſſive: To inflame the audience, ſo as to make them accompany the ſpeaker in ſuch violent paſſions, and ſuch elevated conceptions: And to conceal, under a torrent of eloquence, the artifice by which all this is effectuated! Should this ſentiment even appear to us exceſſive, as perhaps it juſtly may, it will at leaſt ſerve to give an idea of the ſtyle of ancient eloquence, where ſuch ſwelling expreſſions were not rejected as wholly monſtrous and gigantic.

Suitable to this vehemence of thought and ex-

[2] *The original is;* Quod ſi hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad aliquos amicos noſtræ civitatis, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audiſſent; denique, ſi non ad homines, verum ad beſtias; aut etiam, ut longius progrediar, ſi in aliqua deſertiſſima ſolitudine, ad ſaxa & ad ſcopulos hæc conqueri & deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima, tanta & tam indigna rerum atrocitate commoverentur.

Cicero in Ver.

preſſion, was the vehemence of action obſerved in the ancient orators. The *ſupploſio pedis*, or ſtamping with the foot, was one of the moſt uſual and moderate geſtures which they made uſe of [3]; though that is now eſteemed too violent, either for the ſenate, bar, or pulpit, and is only admitted into the theatre, to accompany the moſt violent paſſions which are there repreſented.

One is ſomewhat at a loſs to what cauſe we may aſcribe ſo ſenſible a decline of eloquence in later ages. The genius of mankind, at all times, is perhaps equal: The moderns have applied themſelves, with great induſtry and ſucceſs, to all the other arts and ſciences: And a learned nation poſſeſſes a popular government; a circumſtance which ſeems requiſite for the full diſplay of theſe noble talents: But notwithſtanding all theſe advantages, our progreſs in eloquence is very inconſiderable, in compariſon of the advances which we have made in all other parts of learning.

Shall we aſſert, that the ſtrains of ancient eloquence are unſuitable to our age, and ought not to be imitated by modern orators? Whatever reaſons may be made uſe of to prove this, I am perſuaded they will be found, upon examination, to be unſound and unſatisfactory.

[3] Ubi dolor? Ubi ardor animi, qui etiam ex infantium ingeniis elicere voces & querelas ſolet? nulla perturbatio animi, nulla corporis; frons non percuſſa, non femur; pedis (*quod mininum eſt*) nulla ſupploſio. Itaque tantum abfuit ut inflammare noſtros animos; ſomnum iſto loco vix tenebamus.

Cicero de Claris Oratoribus.

Firſt, it may be ſaid, that in ancient times, during the flouriſhing period of Greek and Roman learning, the municipal laws, in every ſtate, were but few and ſimple, and the deciſion of cauſes was, in a great meaſure, left to the equity and common ſenſe of the judges. The ſtudy of the laws was not then a laborious occupation, requiring the drudgery of a whole life to finiſh it, and incompatible with every other ſtudy or profeſſion. The great ſtateſmen and generals among the Romans were all lawyers; and Cicero, to ſhow the facility of acquiring this ſcience, declares, that in the midſt of all his occupations, he would undertake, in a few days, to make himſelf a complete civilian. Now, where, a pleader addreſſes himſelf to the equity of his judges, he has much more room to diſplay his eloquence, than where he muſt draw his arguments from ſtrict laws, ſtatutes, and precedents. In the former caſe, many circumſtances muſt be taken in; many perſonal conſiderations regarded; and even favor and inclination, which it belongs to the orator, by his art and eloquence, to conciliate, may be diſguiſed under the appearance of equity. But how ſhall a modern lawyer have leiſure to quit his toilſome occupations, in order to gather the flowers of Parnaſſus? Or what apportunity ſhall he have of diſplaying them, amidſt the rigid and ſubtle arguments, objections, and replies, which he is obliged to make uſe of? The greateſt genius, and greateſt orator, who ſhould pretend to plead

before the *Chancellor*, after a month's ſtudy of the laws, would only labor to make himſelf ridiculous.

I am ready to own, that this circumſtance of the multiplicity and intricacy of laws, is a diſcouragement to eloquence in modern times: But I aſſert, that it will not entirely account for the decline of that noble art. It may baniſh oratory from Weſtminſter-Hall, but not from either houſe of parliament. Among the Athenians, the Areopagites expreſsly forbad all allurements of eloquence; and ſome have pretended that in the Greek orations, written in the *judiciary* form, there is not ſo bold and rhetorical a ſtyle as appears in the Roman. But to what a pitch did the Athenians carry their eloquence in the *deliberative* kind, when affairs of ſtate were canvaſſed, and the liberty, happineſs, and honor of the republic were the ſubject of debate? Diſputes of this nature elevate the genius above all others, and give the fulleſt ſcope to eloquence; and ſuch diſputes are very frequent in this nation.

Secondly, it may be pretended that the decline of eloquence is owing to the ſuperior good ſenſe of the moderns, who reject with diſdain all thoſe rhetorical tricks employed to ſeduce the judges, and will admit of nothing but ſolid argument in any debate of deliberation. If a man be accuſed of murder, the fact muſt be proved by witneſſes and evidence; and the laws will afterwards determine the puniſhment of the criminal. It would be ridiculous to deſcribe, in ſtrong colors, the horror and cruelty of the action: To introduce the

relations of the dead; and, at a ſignal, make them throw themſelves at the feet of the jugdes, imploring juſtice with tears and lamentations: And ſtill more ridiculous would it be, to employ a picture reſpreſenting the bloody deed, in order to move the judges by the diſplay of ſo tragical a ſpectacle; though we know that this artifice was ſometimes practiſed by the pleaders of old [4]. Now, baniſh the pathetic from public diſcourſes, and you reduce the ſpeakers merely to modern eloquence; that is, to good ſenſe, delivered in proper expreſſion.

Perhaps it may be acknowledged, that our modern cuſtoms, or our ſuperior good ſenſe, if you will, ſhould make our orators more cautious and reſerved than the ancient, in attempting to inflame the paſſions, or elevate the imagination of their audience; but I ſee no reaſon why it ſhould make them deſpair abſolutely of ſucceeding in that attempt. It ſhould make them redouble their art, not abandon it entirely. The ancient orators ſeem alſo to have been on their guard againſt this jealouſy of their audience; but they took a different way of eluding it [5]. They hurried away with ſuch a torrent of ſublime and pathetic, that they left their hearers no leiſure to perceive the artifice by which they were deceived. Nay, to conſider the matter aright, they were not deceived by any artifice. The orator, by the force of his own genius and eloquence, firſt inflamed himſelf with anger, indignation, pity, ſorrow; and then

[4] Quintil. lib. vi. cap. 1. [5] Longinus, cap. 15.

communicated thoſe impetuous movements to his audience.

Does any man pretend to have more good ſenſe than Julius Cæſar? yet that haughty conqueror, we know, was ſo ſubdued by the charms of Cicero's eloquence, that he was in a manner conſtrained to change his ſettled purpoſe and reſolution, and to abſolve a criminal, whom, before that orator pleaded, he was determined to condemn.

Some objections, I own, notwithſtanding his vaſt ſucceſs, may lie againſt ſome paſſages of the Roman orator. He is too florid and rhetorical: His figures are too ſtriking and palpable: The diviſions of his diſcourſe are drawn chiefly from the rules of the ſchools: And his wit diſdains not always the artifice even of a pun, rhyme, or jingle of words. The Grecian adreſſed himſelf to an audience, much leſs refined than the Roman ſenate or judges. The loweſt vulgar of Athens were his ſovereigns, and arbiters of his eloquence [*]. Yet is his manner more chaſte and auſtere than that of the other. Could it be copied, its ſucceſs would be infallible over a modern aſſembly. It is rapid harmony, exactly adjuſted to the ſenſe: it is vehement reaſoning, without any appearance of art: It is diſdain, anger, boldneſs, freedom, involved in a continued ſtream of argument: And of all human productions, the orations of Demoſthenes preſent to us the models which approach the neareſt to perfection.

Thirdly, it may be pretended, that the diſorders of the ancient governments, and the enormous

[*] See Note [D].

crimes of which the citizens were often guilty, afforded much ampler matter for eloquence than can be met with among the moderns. Were there no Verres and Catiline, there would be no Cicero. But that this reaſon can have no great influence, is evident. It would be eaſy to find a Philip in modern times; but where ſhall we find a Demoſthenes?

What remains, then, but that we lay the blame on the want of genius or of jugdment in our ſpeakers, who either found themſelves incapable of reaching the heights of ancient eloquence, or rejected all ſuch endeavours as unſuitable to the ſpirit of modern aſſemblies? A few ſucceſsful attempts of this nature might rouſe the genius of the nation, excite the emulation of the youth, and accuſtom our ears to a more ſublime and more pathetic elocution, than what we have been hitherto entertained with. There is certainly ſomething accidental in the firſt riſe and the progreſs of the arts in any nation. I doubt whether a very ſatisfactory reaſon can be given, why ancient Rome, though it received all its refinements from Greece, could attain only to a reliſh for ſtatuary, painting, and architecture, without reaching the practice of theſe arts: While modern Rome has been excited by a few remains found among the ruins of antiquity, and has produced artiſts of the greateſt eminence and diſtinction. Had ſuch a cultivated genius for oratory, as Waller's for poetry, ariſen, during the civil wars, when liberty began to be fully eſtabliſhed, and popular aſſemblies to enter into all the moſt material points of government; I am perſuaded ſo illuſtrious an example

would have given a quite different turn to Britiſh eloquence, and made us reach the perfection of the ancient model. Our orators would then have done honor to their country, as well as our poets, geometers, and philoſophers, and Britiſh Ciceros have appeared, as well as Britiſh Archimedeſes and Virgils.

It is ſeldom or never found, when a falſe taſte in poetry or eloquence prevails among any people, that it has been preferred to a true, upon compariſon and reflection. It commonly prevails merely from ignorance of the true, and from the want of perfect models, to lead men into a juſter apprehenſion, and more refined reliſh of thoſe productions of genius. When *theſe* appear, they ſoon unite all ſuffrages in their favor, and, by their natural and powerful charms, gain over, even the moſt prejudiced, to the love and admiration of them. The principles of every paſſion, and of every ſentiment, is in every man; and when touched properly, they riſe to life, and warm the heart, and convey that ſatisfaction by which a work of genius is diſtinguiſhed from the adulterate beauties of a capricious wit and fancy. And if this obſervation be true with regard to all the liberal arts, it muſt be peculiarly ſo with regard to eloquence; which, being merely calculated for the public, and for men of the world, cannot, with any pretence of reaſon, appeal from the people to more refined judges; but muſt ſubmit to the public verdict, without reſerve or limitation. Whoever, upon compariſon, is deemed by a common audience the greateſt

orator, ought moſt certainly to be pronounced ſuch by men of ſcience and erudition. And though an indifferent ſpeaker may triumph for a long time, and be eſteemed altogether perfect by the vulgar, who ere ſatisfied with his accompliſhments, and know not in what he is defective; yet, whenever the true genius ariſes, *he* draws to him the attention of every one, and immediately appears ſuperior to his rival.

Now to judge by this rule, ancient eloquence, that is, the ſublime and paſſionate, is of a much juſter taſte than the modern, or the argumentative and rational; and, if properly executed, will always have more command and authority over mankind. We are ſatisfied with our mediocrity, becauſe we have had no experience of any thing better: But the ancients had experience of both, and upon compariſon, gave the preference to that kind of which they have left us ſuch applauded models. For, if I miſtake not, our modern eloquence is of the ſame ſtyle or ſpecies with that which ancient critics denominated Attic eloquence, that is, calm, elegant, and ſubtile, which inſtructed the reaſon more than affected the paſſions, and never raiſed its tone above argument or common diſcourſe. Such was the eloquence of Lyſias among the Athenians, and of Calvus among the Romans. Theſe were eſteemed in their time; but when compared with Demoſthenes and Cicero, were eclipſed like a taper when ſet in the rays of a meridian ſun. Thoſe latter orators poſſeſſed the ſame elegance and ſubtilty, and force of argument,

with the former; but what rendered them chiefly admirable, was that pathetic and ſublime, which, on proper occaſions, they threw into their diſcourſe, and by which they commanded the reſolution of their audience.

Of this ſpecies of eloquence we have ſcarcely had any inſtance in England, at-leaſt in our public ſpeakers. In our writers we have had ſome inſtances, which have met with great applauſe, and might aſſure our ambitious youth of equal or ſuperior glory in attempts for the revival of ancient eloquence. Lord Bolingbroke's productions, with all their defects in argument, method, and preciſion, contain a force and energy which our orators ſcarcely ever aim at; though it is evident, that ſuch an elevated ſtyle has much better grace in a ſpeaker than in a writer, and is aſſured of more prompt and more aſtoniſhing ſucceſs. It is there ſeconded by the graces of voice and action: The movements are mutually communicated between the orator and the audience: and the very aſpect of a large aſſembly, attentive to the diſcourſe of one man, muſt inſpire him with a peculiar elevation, ſufficient to give a propriety to the ſtrongeſt figures and expreſſions. It is true, there is a great prejudice againſt *ſet ſpeeches;* and a man cannot eſcape ridicule, who repeats a diſcourſe as a ſchool-boy does his leſſon, and takes no notice of any thing that has been advanced in the courſe of the debate. But where is the neceſſity of falling into this abſurdity? A public ſpeaker muſt know beforehand the queſtion under debate. He may compoſe

all the arguments, objections, and anſwers, ſuch as he thinks will be moſt proper for his diſcourſe [7]. If any thing new occur, he may ſupply it from his invention; nor will the difference be very apparent between his elaborate and his extemporary compoſitions. The mind naturally continues with the ſame *impetus* or *force* which it has acquired by its motion; as a veſſel, once impelled by the oars, carries on its courſe for ſome time when the original impulſe is ſuſpended.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that even though our modern orators ſhould not elevate their ſtyle, or aſpire to a rivalſhip with the ancient; yet is there, in moſt of their ſpeeches, a material defect, which they might correct, without departing from that compoſed air of argument and reaſoning to which they limit their ambition. Their great affectation of extemporary diſcourſes has made them reject all order and method, which ſeems ſo requiſite to argument, and without which it is ſcarcely poſſible to produce an entire conviction on the mind. It is not that one would recommend many diviſions in a public diſcourſe, unleſs the ſubject very evidently offer them; but it is eaſy, without this formality, to obſerve a method, and make that method conſpicuous to the hearers, who will be infinitely pleaſed to ſee the arguments riſe naturally from one another, and will retain a

[7] The firſt of the Athenians who compoſed and wrote his ſpeeches was Pericles, a man of buſineſs and a man of ſenſe, if ever there was one, Περικλης γραπτον λογον εν δικαστηριω εφηνε των προ αυτου χειδιαζοντων. Suidas in Περικλης.

more thorough perſuaſion than can ariſe from the ſtrongeſt reaſons which are thrown together in confuſion.

ESSAY XIV.

OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES.

NOTHING requires greater nicety in our inquiries concerning human affairs, than to diſtinguiſh exactly what is owing to *chance*, and what proceeds from *cauſes*; nor is there any ſubject in which an author is more liable to deceive himſelf by falſe ſubtilties and refinements. To ſay that any event is derived from chance, cuts ſhort all farther inquiry concerning it, and leaves the writer in the ſame ſtate of ignorance with the reſt of mankind. But when the event is ſuppoſed to proceed from certain and ſtable cauſes, he may then diſplay his ingenuity in aſſigning theſe cauſes; and as a man of any ſubtlety can never be at a loſs in this particular, he has thereby an opportunity of ſwelling his volumes, and diſcovering his profound knowledge in obſerving what eſcapes the vulgar and ignorant.

The diſtinguiſhing between chance and cauſes muſt depend upon every particular man's ſagacity in conſidering every particular incident. But if I were to aſſign any general rule to help us in applying this diſtinction, it would be the following: *What depends upon a few perſons is in a great meaſure*

to

to be aſcribed to chance, or ſecret and unknown cauſes: What ariſes from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known cauſes.

Two natural reaſons may be aſſigned for this rule. *Firſt*, if you ſuppoſe a die to have any bias, however ſmall, to a particular ſide, this bias, though perhaps it may not appear in a few throws, will certainly prevail in a great number, and will caſt the balance entirely to that ſide. In like manner, when any *cauſes* beget a particular inclination or paſſion, at a certain time and among a certain people, though many individuals may eſcape the contagion, and be ruled by paſſions peculiar to themſelves; yet the multitude will certainly be ſeized by the common affection, and be governed by it in all their actions.

Secondly, thoſe principles or cauſes which are fitted to operate on a multitude, are always of a groſſer and more ſtubborn nature, leſs ſubject to accidents, and leſs influenced by whim and private fancy, than thoſe which operate on a few only. The latter are commonly ſo delicate and refined, that the ſmalleſt incident in the health, education, or fortune of a particular perſon, is ſufficient to divert their courſe and retard their operation; nor is it poſſible to reduce them to any general maxims or obſervations. Their influence at one time will never aſſure us concerning their influence at another, even though all the general circumſtances ſhould be the ſame in both caſes.

To judge by this rule, the domeſtic and the gradual revolution of a ſtate muſt be a more proper

ſubject of reaſoning and obſervation than the foreign and the violent, which are commonly produced by ſingle perſons, and are more influenced by whim, folly, or caprice, than by general paſſions and intereſts. The depreſſion of the lords, and riſe of the commons in England, after the ſtatutes of alienation, and the increaſe of trade and induſtry, are more eaſily accounted for by general principles, than the depreſſion of the Spaniſh and riſe of the French monarchy after the death of Charles Quint. Had Harry IV. Cardinal Richelieu, and Louis XIV. been Spaniards, and Philip II. III. and IV. and Charles II. been Frenchmen, the hiſtory of theſe two nations had been entirely reverſed.

For the ſame reaſon, it is more eaſy to account for the riſe and progreſs of commerce in any kingdom than for that of learning; and a ſtate which ſhould apply itſelf to the encouragement of the one, would be more aſſured of ſucceſs than one which ſhould cultivate the other. Avarice, or the deſire of gain, is an univerſal paſſion, which operates at all times, in all places, and upon all perſons: but curioſity, or the love of knowledge, has a very limited influence, and requires youth, leiſure, education, genius, and example, to make it govern any perſon. You will never want bookſellers while there are buyers of books; but there may frequently be readers where there are no authors. Multitudes of people, neceſſity and liberty, have begotten commerce in Holland; but ſtudy and application have ſcarcely produced any eminent writers.

We may therefore conclude, that there is no ſubject in which we muſt proceed with more caution, than in

tracing the hiſtory of the arts and ſciences; leſt we aſſign cauſes which never exiſted, and reduce what is merely contingent to ſtable and univerſal principles. Thoſe who cultivate the ſciences in any ſtate are always few in number; the paſſion which governs them limited; their taſte and judgment delicate, and eaſily perverted; and their application diſturbed with the ſmalleſt accident. Chance therefore, or ſecret and unknown cauſes, muſt have a great influence on the riſe and progreſs of all the refined arts.

But there is a reaſon which induces me not to aſcribe the matter altogether to chance. Though the perſons who cultivate the ſciences, with ſuch aſtoniſhing ſucceſs as to attract the admiration of poſterity, be always few, in all nations and all ages, it is impoſſible but a ſhare of the ſame ſpirit and genius muſt be antecedently diffuſed throughout the people among whom they ariſe, in order to produce, form, and cultivate, from their earlieſt infancy, the taſte and judgment of thoſe eminent writers. The maſs cannot be altogether inſipid from which ſuch refined ſpirits are extracted. *There is a God within us*, ſays Ovid, *who breathes that divine fire by which we are animated*[1]. Poets, in all ages, have advanced this claim to inſpiration. There is not, however, any thing ſupernatural in the caſe. Their fire is not kindled from heaven: It only runs along the earth; is caught from one breaſt to another; and burns brighteſt where the materials are beſt prepared and moſt happily diſpoſed. The queſtion, therefore,

[1] Eſt Deus in nobis; agitante caleſcimus illo:
Impetus hic, ſacræ ſemina mentis habet.
OVID. *Faſt. lib* i.

concerning the riſe and progreſs of the arts and ſciences is not altogether a queſtion concerning the taſte, genius, and ſpirit of a few, but concerning thoſe of a whole people, and may therefore be accounted for in ſome meaſure by general cauſes and principles. I grant that a man, who ſhould inquire why ſuch a particular poet, as Homer for inſtance, exiſted at ſuch a place, in ſuch a time, would throw himſelf headlong into chimera, and could never treat of ſuch a ſubject without a multitude of falſe ſubtleties and refinements. He might as well pretend to give a reaſon why ſuch particular generals as Fabius and Scipio lived in Rome at ſuch a time, and why Fabius came into the world before Scipio. For ſuch incidents as theſe, no other reaſon can be given than that of Horace:

Scit genius, natale comes, qui temperat aſtrum,
Naturæ Deus humanæ, mortalis in unum —
— Quodque caput, vultu mutabilis, albus & ater.

But I am perſuaded, that in many caſes good reaſons might be given why ſuch a nation is more polite and learned, at a particular time, than any of its neighbours. At leaſt this is ſo curious a ſubject, that it were a pity to abandon it entirely, before we have found whether it be ſuſceptible of reaſoning, and can be reduced to any general principles.

My firſt obſervation on this head is, *That it is impoſſible for the arts and ſciences to ariſe at firſt among any people, unleſs that people enjoy the bleſſing of a free government.*

In the firſt ages of the world, when men are as yet barbarous and ignorant, they ſeek no farther ſecurity againſt mutual violence and injuſtice than the choice of ſome rulers, few or many, in whom they place an implicit confidence, without providing any ſecurity, by laws or political inſtitutions, againſt the violence and injuſtice of theſe rulers. If the authority be centered in a ſingle perſon, and if the people, either by conqueſt or by the ordinary courſe of propagation, increaſe to a great multitude, the monarch, finding it impoſſible in his own perſon to execute every office of ſovereignty in every place, muſt delegate his authority to inferior magiſtrates, who preſerve peace and order in their reſpective diſtricts. As experience and education have not yet refined the judgements of men to any conſiderable degree, the prince, who is himſelf unreſtrained, never dreams of reſtraining his miniſters, but delegates his full authority to every one whom he ſets over any portion of the people. All general laws are attended with inconveniences when applied to particular caſes; and it requires great penetration and experience, both to perceive that theſe inconveniences are fewer than what reſult from full diſcretionary powers in every magiſtrate, and alſo to diſcern what general laws are upon the whole attended with feweſt inconveniences. This is a matter of ſo great difficulty, that men may have made ſome advances, even in the ſublime arts of poetry and eloquence, where a rapidity of genius and imagination aſſiſts their progreſs, before they have

arrived at any great refinement in their municipal laws, where frequent trials and diligent obſervation can alone direct their improvements. It is not therefore to be ſuppoſed, that a barbarous monarch, unreſtrained and uninſtructed, will ever become a legiſlator, or think of reſtraining his *Baſhaws* in every province, or even his *Cadis* in every village. We are told, that the late *Czar*, though actuated with a noble genius, and ſmit with the love and admiration of European arts; yet profeſſed an eſteem for the Turkiſh policy in this particular, and approved of ſuch ſummary deciſions of cauſes as are practiſed in that barbarous monarchy, where the judges are not reſtrained by any methods, forms, or laws. He did not perceive how contrary ſuch a practice would have been to all his other endeavours for refining his people. Arbitrary power, in all caſes, is ſomewhat oppreſſive and debaſing; but it is altogether ruinous and intolerable when contracted into a ſmall compaſs; and becomes ſtill worſe, when the perſon who poſſeſſes it knows that the time of his authority is limited and uncertain. *Habet ſubjectos tanquam ſuos; viles, ut alienos* [2]. He governs the ſubjects with full authority, as if they were his own; and with negligence or tyranny, as belonging to another. A people, governed after ſuch a manner, are ſlaves in the full and proper ſenſe of the word; and it is impoſſible they can ever aſpire to any refinements of taſte or reaſon. They dare not ſo much as pretend to enjoy the neceſſaries of life in plenty or ſecurity.

[2] Tacit. hiſt. lib. i.

To expect, therefore, that the arts and ſciences ſhould take their firſt riſe in a monarchy, is to expect a contradiction. Before theſe refinements have taken place, the monarch is ignorant and uninſtructed; and not having knowledge ſufficient to make him ſenſible of the neceſſity of balancing his government upon general laws, he delegates his full power to all inferior magiſtrates. This barbarous policy debaſes the people, and for ever prevents all improvements. Were it poſſible that, before ſcience were known in the world, a monarch could poſſeſs ſo much wiſdom as to become a legiſlator, and govern his people by law, not by the arbitrary will of their fellow-ſubjects, it might be poſſible for that ſpecies of government to be the firſt nurſery of arts and ſciences. But that ſuppoſition ſeems ſcarcely to be conſiſtent or rational.

It may happen, that a republic, in its infant ſtate, may be ſupported by as few laws as a barbarous monarchy, and may intruſt as unlimited an authority to its magiſtrates or judges. But, beſides that the frequent elections by the people are a conſiderable check upon authority, it is impoſſible but in time the neceſſity of reſtraining the magiſtrates, in order to preſerve liberty, muſt at laſt appear, and give riſe to general laws and ſtatutes. The Roman Conſuls, for ſome time, decided all cauſes without being confined by any poſitive ſtatutes, till the people, bearing this yoke with impatience, created the *decemvirs*, who promulgated the *twelve tables*: a body of laws, which, though perhaps they were not equal in bulk to one

Engliſh act of parliament, were almoſt the only written rules which regulated property and puniſhment, for ſome ages, in that famous republic. They were, however, ſufficient, together with the forms of a free government, to ſecure the lives and properties of the citizens; to exempt one man from the dominion of another; and to protect every one againſt the violence or tyranny of his fellow-citizens. In ſuch a ſituation the ſciences may raiſe their heads and flouriſh: But never can have being amidſt ſuch a ſcene of oppreſſion and ſlavery as always reſults from barbarous monarchies, where the people alone are reſtrained by the authority of the magiſtrates and the magiſtrates are not reſtrained by any law or ſtatute. An unlimited deſpotiſm of this nature, while it exiſts, effectually puts a ſtop to all improvements, and keeps men from attaining that knowledge which is requiſite to inſtruct them in the advantages ariſing from a better police and more moderate authority.

Here then are the advantages of free ſtates. Though a republic ſhould be barbarous, it neceſſarily, by an infallible operation, gives riſe to Law, even before mankind have made any conſiderable advances in the other ſciences. From law ariſes ſecurity; from ſecurity curioſity; and from curioſity knowledge. The latter ſteps of this progreſs may be more accidental; but the former are altogether neceſſary. A republic without laws can never have any duration. On the contrary, in a monarchical government, law ariſes not neceſſarily from the forms of government. Monarchy,

when abſolute, contains even ſomething repugnant to law. Great wiſdom and reflection can alone reconcile them. But ſuch a degree of wiſdom can never be expected before the greater refinements and improvements of human reaſon. Theſe refinements require curioſity, ſecurity, and law. The *firſt* growth, therefore, of the arts and ſciences can never be expected in deſpotic governments.

There are other cauſes which diſcourage the riſe of the refined arts in deſpotic governments; though I take the want of laws, and the delegation of full powers to every petty magiſtrate, to be the principal. Eloquence certainly ſprings up more naturally in popular governments: Emulation too, in every accompliſhment, muſt there be more animated and enlivened; and genius and capacity have a fuller ſcope and career. All theſe cauſes render free governments the only proper *nurſery* for the arts and ſciences.

The next obſervation which I ſhall make on this head is, *That nothing is more favorable to the riſe of politeneſs and learning, than a number of neighbouring and independent ſtates, connected together by commerce and policy.* The emulation which naturally ariſes among thoſe neighbouring ſtates, is an obvious ſource of improvement: But what I would chiefly inſiſt on is the ſtop which ſuch limited territories give both to *power* and to *authority*.

Extended governments, where a ſingle perſon has great influence, ſoon become abſolute; but

ſmall ones change naturally into commonwealths. A large government is accuſtomed by degrees to tyranny; becauſe each act of violence is at firſt performed upon a part, which, being diſtant from the majority, is not taken notice of, nor excites any violent ferment. Beſides, a large government, though the whole be diſcontented, may by a little art be kept in obedience; while each part, ignorant of the reſolutions of the reſt, is afraid to begin any commotion or inſurrection. Not to mention, that there is a ſuperſtitious reverence for princes, which mankind naturally contract when they do not often ſee the ſovereign, and when many of them become not acquainted with him ſo as to perceive his weakneſſes. And as large ſtates can afford a great expenſe, in order to ſupport the pomp of majeſty, this is a kind of faſcination on men, and naturally contributes to the enſlaving of them.

In a ſmall government, any act of oppreſſion is immediately known throughout the whole: The murmurs and diſcontents proceeding from it are eaſily communicated: And the indignation ariſes the higher, becauſe the ſubjects are not apt to apprehend, in ſuch ſtates, that the diſtance is very wide between themſelves and their ſovereign. "No man," ſaid the prince of Condé, "is a "hero to his *Valet de Chambre.*" It is certain that admiration and acquaintance are altogether incompatible towards any mortal creature. Sleep and love convinced even Alexander himſelf

that he was not a God: But I ſuppoſe that ſuch as daily attended him could eaſily, from the numberleſs weakneſſes to which he was ſubject, have given him many ſtill more convincing proofs of his humanity.

But the diviſions into ſmall ſtates are favorable to learning, by ſtopping the progreſs of *authority* as well as that of *power*. Reputation is often as great a faſcination upon men as ſovereignty, and is equally deſtructive to the freedom of thought and examination. But where a number of neighbouring ſtates have a great intercourſe of arts and commerce, their mutual jealouſy keeps them from receiving too lightly the law from each other, in matters of taſte and of reaſoning, and makes them examine every work of art with the greateſt care and accuracy. The contagion of popular opinion ſpreads not ſo eaſily from one place to another. It readily receives a check in ſome ſtate or other, where it concurs not with the prevailing prejudices. And nothing but nature and reaſon, or at leaſt what bears them a ſtrong reſemblance, can force its way through all obſtacles, and unite the moſt rival nations into an eſteem and admiration of it.

Greece was a cluſter of little principalities which ſoon became republics; and being united, both by their near neighbourhood and by the ties of the ſame language and intereſt, they entered into the cloſeſt intercourſe of commerce and learning. There concurred a happy climate, a ſoil not

unfertile, and a moſt harmonious and comprehenſive language; ſo that every circumſtance among that people ſeemed to favor the riſe of the arts and ſciences. Each city produced its ſeveral artiſts and philoſophers, who refuſed to yield the preference to thoſe of the neighbouring republics: Their contention and debates ſharpened the wits of men: A variety of objects was preſented to the judgment, while each challenged the preference to the reſt: and the ſciences, not being dwarfed by the reſtraint of authority, were enabled to make ſuch conſiderable ſhoots, as are, even at this time, the objects of our admiration. After the Roman *Chriſtian* or *Catholic* church had ſpread itſelf over the civilized world, and had engroſſed all the learning of the times, being really one large ſtate within itſelf, and united under one head; this variety of ſects immediately diſappeared, and the Peripatetic philoſophy was alone admitted into all the ſchools, to the utter depravation of every kind of learning. But mankind having at length thrown off this yoke, affairs are now returned nearly to the ſame ſituation as before, and Europe is at preſent a copy at large of what Greece was formerly a pattern in miniature. We have ſeen the advantage of this ſituation in ſeveral inſtances. What checked the progreſs of the Carteſian philoſophy, to which the French nation ſhowed ſuch a ſtrong propenſity towards the end of the laſt century, but the oppoſition made to it by the other nations of Europe,

who ſoon diſcovered the weak ſides of that philoſophy? The ſevereſt ſcrutiny which Newton's theory has undergone, proceeded not from his own countrymen, but from foreigners; and if it can overcome the obſtacles which it meets with at preſent in all parts of Europe, it will probably go down triumphant to the lateſt poſterity. The Engliſh are become ſenſible of the ſcandalous licentiouſneſs of their ſtage, from the example of the French decency and morals. The French are convinced, that their theatre has become ſomewhat effeminate by too much love and gallantry; and begin to approve of the more maſculine taſte of ſome neighbouring nations.

In China, there ſeems to be a pretty conſiderable ſtock of politeneſs and ſcience; which, in the courſe of ſo many centuries, might naturally be expected to ripen into ſomething more perfect and finiſhed than what has yet ariſen from them. But China is one vaſt empire, ſpeaking one language, governed by one law, and ſympathizing in the ſame manners. The authority of any teacher, ſuch as Confucius, was propagated eaſily from one corner of the empire to the other. None had courage to reſiſt the torrent of popular opinion. And poſterity was not bold enough to diſpute what had been univerſally received by their anceſtors. This ſeems to be one natural reaſon why the ſciences have made ſo ſlow a progreſs in that mighty empire [3].

[3] See NOTE [E].

If we conſider the face of the globe, Europe, of all the four parts of the world, is the moſt broken by ſeas, rivers, and mountains; and Greece of all countries of Europe. Hence theſe regions were naturally divided into ſeveral diſtinct governments. And hence the ſciences aroſe in Greece; and Europe has been hitherto the moſt conſtant habitation of them.

I have ſometimes been inclined to think, that interruptions in the periods of learning, were they not attended with ſuch a deſtruction of ancient books and the records of hiſtory, would be rather favorable to the arts and ſciences, by breaking the progreſs of authority, and dethroning the tyrannical uſurpers over human reaſon. In this particular, they have the ſame influence as interruptions in political governments and ſocieties. Conſider the blind ſubmiſſion of the ancient philoſophers to the ſeveral maſters in each ſchool, and you will be convinced, that little good could be expected from a hundred centuries of ſuch a ſervile philoſophy. Even the Eclectics, who aroſe about the age of Auguſtus, notwithſtanding their profeſſing to chuſe freely what pleaſed them from every different ſect, were yet, in the main, as ſlaviſh and dependant as any of their brethren; ſince they ſought for truth, not in nature, but in the ſeveral ſchools; where they ſuppoſed ſhe muſt neceſſarily be found, though not united in a body, yet diſperſed in parts. Upon the revival of learning, thoſe ſects of Stoics and Epicureans, Platoniſts and Pythagoricians, could never regain any credit or authority; and, at the

ſame time, by the example of their fall, kept men from ſubmitting, with ſuch blind deference, to thoſe new ſects which have attempted to gain an aſcendant over them.

The *third* obſervation which I ſhall form on this head of the riſe and progreſs of the arts and ſciences, is, *That though the only proper* Nurſery *of theſe noble plants be a free ſtate, yet may they be tranſplanted into any government; and that a republic is moſt favorable to the growth of theſciences; a civilized monarchy to that of the polite arts.*

To balance a large ſtate or ſociety, whether monarchical or republican, on general laws, is a work of ſo great difficulty, that no human genius, however comprehenſive, is able, by the mere dint of reaſon and reflection, to effect it. The judgments of many muſt unite in this work: Experience muſt guide their labor; time muſt bring it to perfection, and the feeling of inconveniences muſt correct the miſtakes which they inevitably fall into in their firſt trials and experiments. Hence appears the impoſſibility, that this undertaking ſhould be begun and carried on in any monarchy; ſince ſuch a form of government, ere civilized, knows no other ſecret or policy, than that of intruſting unlimited powers to every governor or magiſtrate, and ſubdividing the people into ſo many claſſes and orders of ſlavery. From ſuch a ſituation, no improvement can ever be expected in the ſciences, in the liberal arts, in laws, and ſcarcely in the manual arts and manufactures. The ſame barbariſm and ignor-

ance, with which the government commences, is propagated to all poſterity, and can never come to a period by the efforts or ingenuity of ſuch unhappy ſlaves.

But though law, the ſource of all ſecurity and happineſs, ariſes late in any government, and is the ſlow product of order and of liberty, it is not preſerved with the ſame difficulty with which it is produced; but when it has once taken root, is a hardy plant, which will ſcarcely ever periſh through the ill culture of men, or the rigor of the ſeaſons. The arts of luxury, and much more the liberal arts, which depend on a refined taſte or ſentiment, are eaſily loſt; becauſe they are always reliſhed by a few only, whoſe leiſure, fortune, and genius fit them for ſuch amuſements. But what is profitable to every mortal, and in common life, when once diſcovered, can ſcarcely fall into oblivion, but by the total ſubverſion of ſociety, and by ſuch furious inundations of barbarous invaders as obliterate all memory of former arts and civility. Imitation alſo is apt to tranſport theſe coarſer and more uſeful arts from one climate to another, and make them precede the refined arts in their progreſs; though perhaps they ſprang after them in their firſt riſe and propagation. From theſe cauſes proceed civilized monarchies; where the arts of government, firſt invented in free ſtates, are preſerved to the mutual advantage and ſecurity of ſovereign and ſubject.

However

However perfect, therefore, the monarchical form may appear to ſome politicians, it owes all its perfection to the republican; nor is it poſſible, that a pure deſpotiſm, eſtabliſhed among a barbarous people, can ever, by its native force and energy, refine and poliſh itſelf. It muſt borrow its laws, and methods, and inſtitutions, and conſequently its ſtability and order, from free governments. Theſe advantages are the ſole growth of republics. The extenſive deſpotiſm of a barbarous monarchy, by entering into the detail of the government, as well as into the principal points of adminiſtration, for ever prevents all ſuch improvements.

In a civilized monarchy, the prince alone is unreſtrained in the exerciſe of his authority, and poſſeſſes alone a power, which is not bounded by any thing but cuſtom, example, and the ſenſe of his own intereſt. Every miniſter or magiſtrate, however eminent, muſt ſubmit to the general laws which govern the whole ſociety, and muſt exert the authority delegated to him after the manner which is preſcribed. The people depend on none but their ſovereign for the ſecurity of their property. He is ſo far removed from them, and is ſo much exempt from private jealouſies or intereſts, that this dependence is ſcarcely felt. And thus a ſpecies of government ariſes, to which, in a high political rant, we may give the name of *Tyranny;* but which, by a juſt and prudent adminiſtration, may afford tolerable ſecurity to the people, and may anſwer moſt of the ends of political ſociety.

But though in a civilized monarchy, as well as in a republic, the people have ſecurity for the enjoyment of their property; yet in both theſe forms of government, thoſe who poſſeſs the ſupreme authority have the diſpoſal of many honors and advantages, which excite the ambition and avarice of mankind. The only difference is, that in a republic, the candidates for office muſt look downwards, to gain the ſuffrages of the people; in a monarchy, they muſt turn their attention upwards, to court the good graces and favor of the great. To be ſucceſsful in the former way, it is neceſſary for a man to make himſelf *uſeful*, by his induſtry, capacity, or knowledge; To be proſperous in the latter way, it is requiſite for him to render himſelf *agreeable*, by his wit, complaiſance, or civility. A ſtrong genius ſucceeds beſt in republics: A refined taſte in monarchies. And, conſequently, the ſciences are the more natural growth of the one, and the polite arts of the other.

Not to mention, that monarchies, receiving their chief ſtability from a ſuperſtitious reverence to prieſts and princes, have commonly abridged the liberty of reaſoning, with regard to religion and politics, and conſequently metaphyſics and morals. All theſe form the moſt conſiderable branches of ſcience. Mathematics and natural philoſophy, which only remain, are not half ſo valuable.

Among the arts of converſation, no one pleaſes more than mutual deference or civility, which leads us to reſign our own inclinations to thoſe of

our companion, and to curb and conceal that preſumption and arrogance, ſo natural to the human mind. A good-natured man, who is well educated, practiſes this civility to every mortal, without premeditation or intereſt. But in order to render that valuable quality general among any people, it ſeems neceſſary to aſſiſt the natural diſpoſition by ſome general motive. Where power riſes upwards from the people to the great, as in all republics, ſuch refinements of civility are apt to be little practiſed; ſince the whole ſtate is, by that means, brought near to a level, and every member of it is rendered, in a great meaſure, independent of another. The people have the advantage, by the authority of their ſuffrages: The great, by the ſuperiority of their ſtation. But in a civilized monarchy, there is a long train of dependence from the prince to the peaſant; which is not great enough to render property precarious, or depreſs the minds of the people, but is ſufficient to beget in every one an inclination to pleaſe his ſuperiors, and to form himſelf upon thoſe models which are moſt acceptable to people of condition and education. Politeneſs of manners, therefore, ariſes moſt naturally in monarchies and courts; and where that flouriſhes, none of the liberal arts will be altogether neglected or deſpiſed.

The republics in Europe are at preſent noted for want of politeneſs. *The good-manners of a* Swiſs *civilized in* Holland *, is an expreſſion for ruſticity

* C'eſt la politeſſe d'un Suiſſe
En Hollande civiliſé. ROUSSEAU.

among the French. The Engliſh, in ſome degree, fall under the ſame cenſure, notwithſtanding their learning and genius. And if the Venetians be an exception to the rule, they owe it, perhaps, to their communication with the other Italians, moſt of whoſe governments beget a dependence more than ſufficient for civilizing their manners.

It is difficult to pronounce any judgment concerning the refinements of the ancient republics in this particular. But I am apt to ſuſpect, that the arts of converſation were not brought ſo near to perfection among them as the arts of writing and compoſition. The ſcurrility of the ancient orators, in many inſtances, is quite ſhocking, and exceeds all belief. Vanity too is often not a little offenſive in authors of thoſe ages [5]; as well as the common licentiouſneſs and immodeſty of their ſtyle, *Quicunque impudicus, adulter, ganeo, manu, ventre*, pene, *bona patria laceraverat*, ſays Salluſt in one of the graveſt and moſt moral paſſages of his hiſtory. *Nam fuit ante Helenam Cunnus, teterrima belli cauſa*, is an expreſſion of Horace, in tracing the origin of moral good and evil. Ovid and Lucretius [6] are almoſt as licentious in

[5] It is needleſs to cite Cicero or Pliny on this head; they are too much noted: But one is a little ſurpriſed to find Arrian, a very grave, judicious writer, interrupt the thread of his narration all of a ſudden, to tell his readers, that he himſelf is as eminent among the Greeks for eloquence as Alexander was for arms. Lib. i.

[6] This poet (See lib. iv. 1165.) recommends a very

their ſtyle as Lord Rocheſter; though the former were fine gentlemen and delicate writers, and the latter, from the corruptions of that court in which he lived, ſeems to have thrown off all regard to ſhame and decency. Juvenal inculcates modeſty with great zeal; but ſets a very bad example of it, if we conſider the impudence of his expreſſions.

I ſhall alſo be bold to affirm, that among the ancients, there was not much delicacy of breeding, or that politic deference and reſpect, which civility obliges us either to expreſs or counterfeit towards the perſons with whom we converſe. Cicero was certainly one of the fineſt gentlemen of his age; yet I muſt confeſs I have frequently been ſhocked with the poor figure under which he repreſents his friend Atticus, in thoſe dialogues, where he himſelf is introduced as a ſpeaker. That learned and virtuous Roman, whoſe dignity, though he was only a private gentleman, was inferior to that of no one in Rome, is there ſhown in rather a more pitiful light than Philalethes's friend in our modern dialogues. He is a humble admirer of the orator, pays him frequent compliments, and receives his inſtructions, with

extraordinary cure for love, and what one expects not to meet with in ſo elegant and philoſophical a poem. It ſeems to have been the original of ſome of Dr. Swift's images. The elegant Catullus and Phædrus fall under the ſame cenſure.

all the deference which a ſcholar owes to his maſter[7]. Even Cato is treated in ſomewhat of a cavalier manner in the dialogues *De Finibus*.

One of the moſt particular details of a real dialogue which we meet with in antiquity, is related by Polybius[8]; when Philip king of Macedon, a prince of wit and parts, met with Titus Flamininus, one of the politeſt of the Romans, as we learn from Plutarch[9], accompanied with ambaſſadors from almoſt all the Greek cities. The Ætolian ambaſſador very abruptly tells the king, that he talked like a fool or a madman (λήρειν). *That's evident*, ſays his majeſty, *even to a blind man*; which was a raillery on the blindneſs of his excellency. Yet all this did not paſs the uſual bounds: For the conference was not diſturbed; and Flamininus was very well diverted with theſe ſtrokes of humor. At the end, when Philip craved a little time to conſult with his friends, of whom he had none preſent, the Roman general, being deſirous alſo to ſhow his wit, as the hiſtorian ſays, tells him, *That perhaps the reaſon why he had none of his friends with him, was becauſe he had murdered them all*; which was actually the caſe. This unprovoked piece of ruſticity is not condemned by the hiſtorian; cauſed no farther reſentment in Philip, than to excite a Sardonian

[7] Att. Non mihi videtur ad beate vivendum ſatis eſſe virtutem. Mar. At hercule Bruto meo videtur; cujus ego judicium, pace tua dixerim, longe antepono tuo. Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. v.

[8] Lib. xvii. [9] In vita Flamin.

ſmile, or what we call a grin; and hindered him not from renewing the conference next day. Plutarch [10] too mentions this raillery amongſt the witty and agreeable ſayings of Flamininus.

Cardinal Wolſey apologized for his famous piece of inſolence, in ſaying, Ego & Rex Meus, *I and my king*, by obſerving, that this expreſſion was conformable to the *Latin* idiom, and that a Roman always named himſelf before the perſon to whom, or of whom, he ſpake. Yet this ſeems to have been an inſtance of want of civility among that people. The ancients made it a rule, that the perſon of the greateſt dignity ſhould be mentioned firſt in the diſcourſe; inſomuch, that we find the ſpring of a quarrel and jealouſy between the Romans and Ætolians to have been a poet's naming the Ætolians before the Romans, in celebrating a victory gained by their united arms over the Macedonians [11]. Thus Livia diſguſted Tiberius by placing her own name before his in an inſcription [12].

No advantages in this world are pure and unmixed. In like manner, as modern politeneſs, which is naturally ſo ornamental, runs often into affectation and foppery, diſguiſe and inſincerity; ſo the ancient ſimplicity, which is naturally ſo amiable and affecting, often degenerates into ruſticity and abuſe, ſcurrility and obſcenity.

[10] Plut. in vita Flamin.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Tacit. Ann. lib. iii. cap. 64.

If the ſuperiority in politeneſs ſhould be allowed to modern times, the modern notions of *gallantry*, the natural produce of courts and monarchies, will probably be aſſigned as the cauſes of this refinement. No one denies this invention to be modern [13]: But ſome of the more zealous partiſans of the ancients have aſſerted it to be foppiſh and ridiculous, and a reproach rather than a credit to the preſent age [14]. It may here be proper to examine this queſtion.

Nature has implanted in all living creatures an affection between the ſexes, which, even in the fierceſt and moſt rapacious animals, is not merely confined to the ſatisfaction of the bodily appetite, but begets a friendſhip and mutual ſympathy, which runs through the whole tenor of their lives. Nay, even in thoſe ſpecies where nature limits the indulgence of this appetite to one ſeaſon and to one object, and forms a kind of marriage or aſſociation between a ſingle male and female, there is yet a viſible complacency and benevolence which extends farther, and mutually ſoftens the affections of the ſexes towards each other. How much more muſt this have place in man, where the confinement of the appetite is not natural; but either is derived accidentally from ſome ſtrong charm of love, or ariſes from

[13] In the *Self-Tormentor* of Terence, Clinias, whenever he comes to town, inſtead of waiting on his miſtreſs, ſends for her to come to him.

[14] Lord Shaftesbury, ſee his *Moraliſts*.

reflections on duty and convenience? Nothing, therefore, can proceed leſs from affectation than the paſſion of gallantry. It is *natural* in the higheſt degree. Art and education, in the moſt elegant courts, make no more alteration on it than on all the other laudable paſſions. They only turn the mind more towards it; they refine it; they poliſh it; and give it a proper grace and expreſſion.

But gallantry is as *generous* at it is *natural*. To correct ſuch groſs vices as lead us to commit real injury on others, is the part of morals, and the object of the moſt ordinary education. Where *that* is not attended to in ſome degree, no human ſociety can ſubſiſt. But in order to render converſation, and the intercourſe of minds, more eaſy and agreeable, good-manners have been invented, and have carried the matter ſomewhat farther. Wherever nature has given the mind a propenſity to any vice, or to any paſſion diſagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the oppoſite ſide, and to preſerve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of ſentiments different from thoſe to which they naturally incline. Thus, as we are commonly proud and ſelfiſh, and apt to aſſume the preference above others, a polite man learns to behave with deference towards his companions, and to yield the ſuperiority to them in all the common incidents of ſociety. In like manner, wherever a perſon's ſituation may naturally beget any diſagreeable ſuſpicion in him, it is the part of good-manners to

prevent it, by a ſtudied diſplay of ſentiments directly contrary to thoſe of which he is apt to be jealous. Thus, old men know their infirmities, and naturally dread contempt from the youth: Hence, well-educated youth redouble the inſtances of reſpect and deference to their elders. Strangers and foreigners are without protection: Hence, in all polite countries, they receive the higheſt civilities, and are entitled to the firſt place in every company. A man is lord in his own family, and his gueſts are, in a manner, ſubject to his authority: Hence he is always the loweſt perſon in the company; attentive to the wants of every one; and giving himſelf all the trouble, in order to pleaſe, which may not betray too viſible an affectation, or impoſe too much conſtraint on his gueſts [11]. Gallantry is nothing but an inſtance of the ſame generous attention. As nature has given *man* the ſuperiority above *woman*, by endowing him with greater ſtrength both of mind and body; it is his part to alleviate that ſuperiority as much as poſſible, by the generoſity of his behaviour, and by a ſtudied deference and complaiſance for all her inclinations

[11] The frequent mention in ancient authors of that ill-bred cuſtom of the maſter of the family's eating better bread or drinking better wine at table than he afforded his gueſts, is but an indifferent mark of the civility of thoſe ages. See JUVENAL, ſat. 5. PLINII lib. xiv. cap. 13. Alſo PLINII *Epiſt.* *Lucian de mercede conductis*, *Saturnalia*, &c. There is ſcarcely any part of Europe at preſent ſo uncivilized as to admit of ſuch a cuſtom.

and opinions. Barbarous nations diſplay this ſuperiority, by reducing their females to the moſt abject ſlavery; by confining them, by beating them, by ſelling them, by killing them. But the male ſex, among a polite people, diſcover their authority in a more generous, though not a leſs evident manner; by civility, by reſpect, by complaiſance, and, in a word, by gallantry. In good company, you need not aſk, who is the maſter of the feaſt? The man who ſits in the loweſt place, and who is always induſtrious in helping every one, is certainly the perſon. We muſt either condemn all ſuch inſtances of generoſity as foppiſh and affected, or admit of gallantry among the reſt. The ancient Moſcovites wedded their wives with a whip inſtead of a ring. The ſame people, in their own houſes, took always the precedency above foreigners, even [16] foreign ambaſſadors. Theſe two inſtances of their generoſity and politeneſs are much of a piece.

Gallantry is not leſs compatible with *wiſdom* and *prudence* than with *nature* and *generoſity*; and when under proper regulations, contributes more than any other invention to the *entertainment* and *improvement* of the youth of both ſexes. Among every ſpecies of animals, nature has founded on the love between the ſexes their ſweeteſt and beſt enjoyment. But the ſatisfaction of the bodily appetite is not alone ſufficient to gratify the

[16] See *Relation of three Embaſſies*, by the Earl of CARLISLE.

mind; and even among brute creatures, we find, that their play and dalliance, and other expreſſions of fondneſs, form the greateſt part of the entertainment. In rational beings, we muſt certainly admit the mind for a conſiderable ſhare. Were we to rob the feaſt of all its garniture of reaſon, diſcourſe, ſympathy, friendſhip, and gaiety, what remains would ſcarcely be worth acceptance, in the judgment of the truly elegant and luxurious.

What better ſchool for manners than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavour to pleaſe muſt inſenſibly poliſh the mind, where the example of the female ſoftneſs and modeſty muſt communicate itſelf to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that ſex puts every on on his guard, leſt he give offence by any breach of decency?

Among the ancients, the character of the fair-ſex was conſidered as altogether domeſtic; nor were they regarded as part of the politic world, or of good company. This, perhaps, is the true reaſon why the ancients have not left us one piece of pleaſantry that is excellent (unleſs one may except the banquet of Xenophon and the Dialogues of Lucian), though many of their ſerious compoſitions are altogether inimitable. Horace condemns the coarſe railleries and cold jeſts of Plautus: But, though the moſt eaſy, agreeable, and judicious writer in the world, is his own talent for ridicule very ſtriking or refined! This, therefore, is one conſiderable improvement which the polite arts have received from gallantry and from courts, where it firſt aroſe.

But, to return from this digreſſion, I ſhall advance it as a *fourth* obſervation on this ſubject, of the riſe and progreſs of the arts and ſciences, *That when the arts and ſciences come to perfection in any ſtate, from that moment they naturally or rather neceſſarily decline, and ſeldom or never revive in that nation where they formerly flouriſhed.*

It muſt be confeſſed, that this maxim, though conformable to experience, may at firſt ſight be eſteemed contrary to reaſon. If the natural genius of mankind be the ſame in all ages, and in almoſt all countries (as ſeems to be the truth), it muſt very much forward and cultivate this genius, to be poſſeſſed of patterns in every art, which may regulate the taſte and fix the objects of imitation. The models left us by the ancients gave birth to all the arts about 200 years ago, and have mightily advanced their progreſs in every country of Europe: Why had they not a like effect during the reign of Trajan and his ſucceſſors, when they were much more entire, and were ſtill admired and ſtudied by the whole world? So late as the emperor Juſtinian, the Poet, by way of diſtinction, was underſtood, among the Greeks, to be Homer; among the Romans, Virgil. Such admiration ſtill remained for theſe divine geniuſes, though no poet had appeared for many centuries, who could juſtly pretend to have imitated them.

A man's genius is always, in the beginning of life, as much unknown to himſelf as to others; and it is only after frequent trials, attended with

ſucceſs, that he dares think himſelf equal to thoſe undertakings, in which thoſe who have ſucceeded have fixed the admiration of mankind. If his own nation be already poſſeſſed of many models of eloquence, he naturally compares his own juvenile exerciſes with theſe; and being ſenſible of the great diſproportion, is diſcouraged from any farther attempts, and never aims at a rivalſhip with thoſe authors whom he ſo much admires. A noble emulation is the ſource of every excellence. Admiration and modeſty naturally extinguiſh this emulation. And no one is ſo liable to an exceſs of admiration and modeſty as a truly great genius.

Next to emulation, the greateſt encourager of the noble arts is praiſe and glory. A writer is animated with new force when he hears the applauſes of the world for his former productions; and being rouſed by ſuch a motive, he often reaches a pitch of perfection which is equally ſurpriſing to himſelf and to his readers. But when the poſts of honor are all occupied, his firſt attempts are but coldly received by the public; being compared to productions which are both in themſelves more excellent, and have already the advantage of an eſtabliſhed reputation. Were Moliere and Corneille to bring upon the ſtage at preſent their early productions, which were formerly ſo well received, it would diſcourage the young poets to ſee the indifference and diſdain of the public. The ignorance of the age alone could have given admiſſion to the *Prince of Tyre;* but it is to that we owe *the Moor:* Had *Every man*

in his Humour been rejected, we had never ſeen *Volpone.*

Perhaps it may not be for the advantage of any nation to have the arts imported from their neighbours in too great perfection. This extinguiſhes emulation, and ſinks the ardor of the generous youth. So many models of Italian painting brought into England; inſtead of exciting our artiſts, is the cauſe of their ſmall progreſs in that noble art. The ſame perhaps was the caſe of Rome when it received the arts from Greece. The multitude of polite productions in the French language, diſperſed all over Germany and the North, hinder theſe nations from cultivating their own language, and keep them ſtill dependent on their neighbours for thoſe elegant entertainments.

It is true, the ancients had left us models in every kind of writing, which are highly worthy of admiration. But beſides that they were written in languages known only to the learned; beſides this, I ſay, the compariſon is not ſo perfect or entire between modern wits and thoſe who lived in ſo remote an age. Had Waller been born in Rome during the reign of Tiberius, his firſt productions had been deſpiſed, when compared to the finiſhed odes of Horace. But, in this iſland, the ſuperiority of the Roman poet diminiſhed nothing from the fame of the Engliſh. We eſteemed ourſelves ſufficiently happy that our climate and language could produce but a faint copy of ſo excellent an original.

In ſhort, the arts and ſciences, like ſome plants, require a freſh ſoil; and, however rich the land may be, and however you may recruit it by art or care, it will never, when once exhauſted, produce any thing that is perfect or finiſhed in the kind.

ESSAY XV.

THE EPICUREAN[1].

IT is a great mortification to the vanity of man, that his utmoſt art and induſtry can never equal the meaneſt of nature's productions, either for beauty or value. Art is only the under-workman, and is employed to give a few ſtrokes of embelliſhment to thoſe pieces which come from the hand of the maſter. Some of the drapery may be of his drawing, but he is not allowed to touch

[1] Or, *the man of elegance and pleaſure.* The intention of this and the three following Eſſays is not ſo much to explain accurately the ſentiments of the ancient ſects of philoſophy, as to deliver the ſentiments of ſects that naturally form themſelves in the world, and entertain different ideas of human life and of happineſs. I have given each of them the name of the philoſophical ſect to which it bears the greateſt affinity.

the

the principal figure. Art may make a ſuit of clothes; but nature muſt produce a man.

Even in thoſe productions, commonly denominated works of art, we find that the nobleſt of the kind are beholden for their chief beauty to the force and happy influence of nature. To the native enthuſiaſm of the poets, we owe whatever is admirable in their productions. The greateſt genius, where nature at any time fails him (for ſhe is not equal), throws aſide the lyre, and hopes not, from the rules of art, to reach that divine harmony which muſt proceed from her inſpiration alone. How poor are thoſe ſongs, where a happy flow of fancy has not furniſhed materials for art to embelliſh and refine!

But of all the fruitleſs attempts of art, no one is ſo ridiculous as that which the ſevere philoſophers have undertaken, the producing *artificial happineſs*, and making us be pleaſed by rules of reaſon and by reflection. Why did none of them claim the reward which Xerxes promiſed to him who ſhould invent a new pleaſure? Unleſs, perhaps, they invented ſo many pleaſures for their own uſe, that they deſpiſed riches, and ſtood in no need of any enjoyments which the rewards of that monarch could procure them. I am apt, indeed, to think, that they were not willing to furniſh the Perſian court with a new pleaſure, by preſenting it with ſo new and unuſual an object of ridicule. Their ſpeculation, when confined to theory, and gravely delivered in the ſchools of Greece, might

excite admiration in their ignorant pupils: But the attempting to reduce ſuch principles to practice would ſoon have betrayed their abſurdity.

You pretend to make me happy by reaſon, and by rules of art. You muſt, then, create me anew by rules of art. For on my original frame and ſtructure does my happineſs depend. But you want power to affect this; and ſkill too, I am afraid: Nor can I entertain a leſs opinion of nature's wiſdom than of yours. And let her conduct the machine which ſhe has ſo wiſely framed. I find, that I ſhould only ſpoil it by my tampering.

To what purpoſe ſhould I pretend, to regulate, refine, or invigorate any of thoſe ſprings or principles which nature has implanted in me? Is this the road by which I muſt reach happineſs? But happineſs implies eaſe, contentment, repoſe, and pleaſure; not watchfulneſs, care, and fatigue. This health of my body conſiſts in the facility with which all its operations are performed. The ſtomach digeſts the aliments; the heart circulates the blood; the brain ſeparates and refines the ſpirits; and all this without my concerning myſelf in the matter. When by my will alone I can ſtop the blood as it runs with impetuoſity along its canals, then may I hope to change the courſe of my ſentiments and paſſions. In vain ſhould I ſtrain my faculties, and endeavour to receive pleaſure from an object which is not fitted by nature to affect my organs with delight. I may give myſelf pain by my

fruitleſs endeavours, but ſhall never reach any pleaſure.

Away, then, with all thoſe vain pretences of making ourſelves happy within ourſelves, of feaſting on our own thoughts, of being ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of well-doing, and of deſpiſing all aſſiſtance and all ſupplies from external objects. This is the voice of Pride, not of Nature. And it were well, if even this pride could ſupport itſelf, and communicate a real *inward* pleaſure, however melancholy or ſevere. But this impotent pride can do no more than regulate the *outſide*; and with infinite pains and attention compoſe the language and countenance to a philoſophical dignity, in order to deceive the ignorant vulgar. The heart, meanwhile, is empty of all enjoyment; and the mind, unſupported by its proper objects, ſinks into the deepeſt ſorrow and dejection. Miſerable, but vain mortal! Thy mind be happy within itſelf! With what reſources is it endowed to fill ſo immenſe a void, and ſupply the place of all thy bodily ſenſes and faculties? Can thy head ſubſiſt without thy other members? In ſuch a ſituation,

What fooliſh figure muſt it make?
Do nothing elſe but ſleep *and* ake.

Into ſuch a lethargy or ſuch a melancholy muſt thy mind be plunged when deprived of foreign occupations and enjoyments.

Keep me therefore no longer in this violent conſtraint. Confine me not within myſelf; but point

out to me thoſe objects and pleaſures which afford the chief enjoyment. But why do I apply to you, proud and ignorant ſages, to ſhow me the road to happineſs? Let me conſult my own paſſions and inclinations. In them muſt I read the dictates of nature, not in your frivolous diſcourſes.

But ſee, propitious to my wiſhes, the divine, the admirable pleaſure [2], the ſupreme love of Gods and men, advances towards me. At her approach, my heart beats with genial heat, and every ſenſe and every faculty is diſſolved in joy; while ſhe pours around me all the embelliſhments of the ſpring and all the treaſures of the autumn. The melody of her voice charms my ears with the ſofteſt muſic, as ſhe invites me to partake of thoſe delicious fruits which, with a ſmile that diffuſes a glory on the heavens and the earth, ſhe preſents to me. The ſportive Cupids who attend her, or fan me with their odoriferous wings, or pour on my head the moſt fragrant oils, or offer me their ſparkling nectar in golden goblets. O! for ever let me ſpread my limbs on this bed of roſes, and thus, thus feel the delicious moments, with ſoft and downy ſteps, glide along. But, cruel chance! whither do you fly ſo faſt? Wy do my ardent wiſhes and that load of pleaſures under which you labor, rather haſten than retard your unrelenting pace? Suffer me to enjoy this ſoft repoſe?

[2] *Dia Voluptas.* LUCRET.

after all my fatigues in ſearch of happineſs. Suffer me to ſatiate myſelf with theſe delicacies, after the pains of ſo long and ſo fooliſh an abſtinence.

But it will not do. The roſes have loſt their hue; the fruit its flavor: And that delicious wine, whoſe fumes, ſo late, intoxicated all my ſenſes with ſuch delight, now ſolicits in vain the fated palate. *Pleaſure* ſmiles at my languor. She beckons her ſiſter, *Virtue*, to come to her aſſiſtance. The gay, the frolic *Virtue* obſerves the call, and brings along the whole troop of my jovial friends. Welcome, thrice welcome, my ever dear companions, to theſe ſhady bowers, and to this luxurious repaſt. Your preſence has reſtored to the roſe its hue, and to the fruit its flavor. The vapors of this ſprightly nectar now again play around my heart, while you partake of my delights, and diſcover, in your cheerful looks, the pleaſure which you receive from my happineſs and ſatisfaction. The like do I receive from yours; and encouraged by your joyous preſence, ſhall again renew the feaſt, with which, from too much enjoyment, my ſenſes were well nigh fated; while the mind kept not pace with the body, nor afforded relief to her over-burdened partner.

In our cheerful diſcourſes, better than in the formal reaſonings of the ſchools, is true wiſdom to be found. In our friendly endearments, better than in the hollow debates of ſtateſmen and pretended patriots, does true virtue diſplay itſelf.

Forgetful of the paſt, ſecure of the future, let us here enjoy the preſent; and while we yet poſſeſs a being, let us fix ſome good, beyond the power of fate or fortune. To morrow will bring its own pleaſures along with it: Or ſhould it diſappoint our fond wiſhes, we ſhall at leaſt enjoy the pleaſure of reflecting on the pleaſures of to-day.

Fear not, my friends, that the barbarous diſſonance of Bacchus, and of his revellers, ſhould break in upon this entertainment, and confound us with their turbulent and clamorous pleaſures. The ſprightly muſes wait around: and with their charming ſymphony, ſufficient to ſoften the wolves and tigers of the ſavage deſert, inſpire a ſoft joy into every boſom. Peace, harmony, and concord reign in this retreat; nor is the ſilence ever broken but by the muſic of our ſongs, or the cheerful accents of our friendly voices.

But hark! the favorite of the muſes, the gentle Damon, ſtrikes the lyre; and while he accompanies its harmonious notes with his more harmonious ſong, he inſpires us with the ſame happy debauch of fancy by which he is himſelf tranſported. "ye happy youth", he ſings, "ye favor-
" ed of heaven [3], while the wanton ſpring pours
" upon you all her blooming honors, let not *glory*
" ſeduce you, with her deluſive blaze, to paſs in
" perils and dangers this delicious ſeaſon, this

[3] An imitation of the Syrens ſong in Taſſo:
" O Giovinetti, mentre Aprile e Maggio
" V'ammantan di fiorite e verde ſpoglie," &c.
Gieruſalemme liberata, *Canto* 14.

" prime of life. Wiſdom points out to you the " road to pleaſure: Nature too beckons you to " follow her in that ſmooth and flowery path. Will " you ſhut your ears to their commanding voice? " Will you harden your heart to their ſoft allure- " ments? O, deluded mortals! thus to loſe your " youth, thus to throw away ſo invaluable a pre- " ſent, to trifle with ſo periſhing a bleſſing. Con- " template well your recompence. Conſider that " glory which ſo allures your proud hearts, and " ſeduces you with your own praiſes. It is an echo, " a dream, nay the ſhadow of a dream, diſſipated " by every wind, and loſt by every contrary breath " of the ignorant and ill-judging multitude. You " fear not that even death itſelf ſhall raviſh it from " you. But behold! while you are yet alive, ca- " lumny bereaves you of it; ignorance neglects " it; nature enjoys is not; fancy alone, renoun- " cing every pleaſure, receives this airy recom- " pence, empty and unſtable as herſelf."

Thus the hours paſs unperceived along, and lead in their wanton train all the pleaſures of ſenſe, and all the joys of harmony and friendſhip. Smiling *innocence* cloſes the proceſſion; and while ſhe preſents herſelf to our raviſhed eyes, ſhe embelliſhes the whole ſcene, and renders the view of theſe pleaſures as tranſporting, after they have paſt us, as when, with laughing countenances, they were yet advancing towards us.

But the ſun has ſunk below the horiſon; and darkneſs, ſtealing ſilently upon us, has now buried all nature in an univerſal ſhade. " Rejoice, my

" friends, continue your repaſt, or change it for " ſoft repoſe. Though abſent, your joy or your " tranquillity ſhall ſtill be mine." *But whither do you go? Or what new pleaſures call you from our ſociety? Is there aught agreeable without your friends? And can aught pleaſe, in which we partake not;* " Yes, " my friends; the joy which I now ſeek admits " not of your participation. Here alone I wiſh " your abſence; and here alone can I find a ſuffi- " ficient compenſation for the loſs of your ſociety."

But I have not advanced far through the ſhades of the thick wood, which ſpread a double night around me, ere, methinks, I perceive through the gloom the charming Cælia, the miſtreſs of my wiſhes, who wanders impatient through the grove, and, preventing the appointed hour, ſilently chides my tardy ſteps. But the joy which ſhe receives from my preſence beſt pleads my excuſe; and diſſipating every anxious and every angry thought, leaves room for nought but mutual joy and rapture. With what words, my fair one, ſhall I expreſs my tenderneſs, or deſcribe the emotions which now warm my tranſported boſom! Words are too faint to deſcribe my love; and if, alas! you feel not the ſame flame within you, in vain ſhall I endeavour to convey to you a juſt conception of it. But your every word and every motion ſuffice to remove this doubt; and, while they expreſs your paſſion, ſerve alſo to enflame mine. How amiable this ſolitude, this ſilence, this darkneſs! No objects now importune the raviſhed ſoul. The thought, the ſenſe, all full of nothing but our mutual happineſs,

wholly poſſeſs the mind, and convey a pleaſure, which deluded mortals vainly ſeek for in every other enjoyment. —

But why does your boſom heave with theſe ſighs, while tears bathe your glowing cheeks? Why diſtract your heart with ſuch vain anxieties? Why ſo often aſk me, *How long my love ſhall yet endure?* Alas! my Cælia, can I reſolve this queſtion? *Do I know how long my life ſhall yet endure?* But does this alſo diſturb your tender breaſt? And is the image of our frail mortality for ever preſent with you, to throw a damp on your gayeſt hours, and poiſon even thoſe joys which love inſpires? Conſider rather, that if life be frail, if youth be tranſitory, we ſhould well employ the preſent moment, and loſe no part of ſo periſhable an exiſtence. Yet a little moment, and *theſe* ſhall be no more; we ſhall be as if we had never been; not a memory of us be left upon earth; and even the fabulous ſhades below will not afford us a habitation. Our fruitleſs anxieties, our vain projects, our uncertain ſpeculations, ſhall all be ſwallowed up and loſt. Our preſent doubts, concerning the original cauſe of all things, muſt never, alas! be reſolved. This alone we may be certain of, that if any governing mind preſide, he muſt be pleaſed to ſee us fulfil the ends of our being, and enjoy that pleaſure for which alone we were created. Let this reflection give eaſe to your anxious thoughts; but render not your joys too ſerious by dwelling for ever upon it. It is ſufficient, once, to be acquainted with this philoſophy, in

order to give an unbounded looſe to love and jollity, and remove all the ſcruples of a vain ſuperſtition: But while youth and paſſion, my fair one, prompt our eager deſires, we muſt find gayer ſubjects of diſcourſe to intermix with theſe amorous careſſes.

ESSAY XVI.

THE STOIC[1].

THERE is this obvious and material difference in the conduct of nature, with regard to man and other animals, that, having endowed the former with a ſublime celeſtial ſpirit, and having given him an affinity with ſuperior beings, ſhe allows not ſuch noble faculties to lie lethargic or idle; but urges him, by neceſſity, to employ, on every emergence, his utmoſt *art* and *induſtry*. Brute-creatures have many of their neceſſities ſupplied by nature, being clothed and armed by this beneficent parent of all things: And where their own *induſtry* is requiſite on any occaſion, nature, by implanting inſtincts, ſtill ſupplies them with the *art*, and guides them to their good, by her unerring precepts. But man, expoſed naked and indigent to the rude elements, riſes ſlowly from that helpleſs ſtate, by the care and vigilance of his parents; and having attained his utmoſt growth and perfection, reaches only a capacity of ſubſiſting

[1] Or the man of action and virtue.

by his own care and vigilance. Every thing is ſold to ſkill and labor; and where nature furniſhes the materials, they are ſtill rude and unfiniſhed, till induſtry, ever active and intelligent, refines them from their brute ſtate, and fits them for human uſe and convenience.

Acknowledge, therefore, O man! the beneficence of nature; for ſhe has given thee that intelligence which ſupplies all thy neceſſities. But let not indolence, under the falſe appearance of gratitude, perſuade thee to reſt contented with her preſents. Wouldeſt thou return to the raw herbage for thy food, to the open ſky for thy covering, and to ſtones and clubs for thy defence againſt the ravenous animals of the deſert? Then return alſo to thy ſavage manners, to thy timorous ſuperſtition, to thy brutal ignorance; and ſink thyſelf below thoſe animals, whoſe condition thou admireſt, and wouldeſt ſo fondly imitate.

Thy kind parent, nature, having given thee art and intelligence, has filled the whole globe with materials to employ theſe talents: Hearken to her voice, which ſo plainly tells thee, that thou thyſelf ſhouldeſt alſo be the object of thy induſtry, and that by art and attention alone thou canſt acquire that ability which will raiſe thee to thy proper ſtation in the univerſe. Behold this artiſan, who converts a rude and ſhapeleſs ſtone into a noble metal; and moulding that metal by his cunning hands, creates, as it were by magic, every weapon for his defence, and every utenſil for his convenience. He has not this ſkill from

nature: Uſe and practice have taught it him: And if thou wouldeſt emulate his ſucceſs, thou muſt follow his laborious foot-ſteps.

But while thou *ambitiouſly* aſpireſt to perfecting thy bodily powers and faculties, wouldeſt thou *meanly* neglect thy mind, and, from a prepoſterous ſloth, leave it ſtill rude and uncultivated, as it came from the hands of nature? Far be ſuch folly and negligence from every rational being. If nature has been frugal in her gifts and endowments, there is the more need of art to ſupply her defects. If ſhe has been generous and liberal, know that ſhe ſtill expects induſtry and application on our part, and revenges herſelf in proportion to our negligent ingratitude. The richeſt genius, like the moſt fertile ſoil, when uncultivated, ſhoots up into the rankeſt weeds; and inſtead of vines and olives for the pleaſure and uſe of man, produces, to its ſlothful owner, the moſt abundant crop of poiſons.

The great end of all human induſtry is the attainment of happineſs. For this were arts invented, ſciences cultivated, laws ordained, and ſocieties modelled, by the moſt profound wiſdom of patriots and legiſlators. Even the lonely ſavage, who lies expoſed to the inclemency of the elements, and the fury of wild beaſts, forgets not for a moment this grand object of his being. Ignorant as he is of every art of life, he ſtill keeps in view the end of all thoſe arts, and eagerly ſeeks for felicity amidſt that darkneſs with which he is environed. But as much as the wildeſt ſavage is inferior

to the poliſhed citizen, who under the protection of laws, enjoys every convenience which induſtry has invented; ſo much is this citizen himſelf inferior to the man of virtue and the true philoſopher, who governs his appetites, ſubdues his paſſions, and has learned, from reaſon, to ſet a juſt value on every purſuit and enjoyment. For is there an art and apprenticeſhip neceſſary for every other attainment? And is there no art of life, no rule, no precepts to direct us in this principal concern? Can no particular pleaſure be attained without ſkill; and can the whole be regulated, without reflection or intelligence, by the blind guidance of appetite and inſtinct? Surely then no miſtakes are ever committed in this affair? but every man, however diſſolute and negligent, proceeds in the purſuit of happineſs with as unerring a motion, as that which the celeſtial bodies obſerve, when, conducted by the hand of the Almighty, they roll along the ethereal plains. But if miſtakes be often, be inevitably committed, let us regiſter theſe miſtakes; let us conſider their cauſes; let us weigh their importance; let us inquire for their remedies. When from this we have fixed all the rules of conduct, we are *philoſophers;* when we have reduced theſe rules to practice, we are *ſages.*

Like many ſubordinate artiſts, employed to form the ſeveral wheels and ſprings of a machine; ſuch are thoſe who excel in all the particular arts of life. *He* is the maſter-workman who puts thoſe ſeveral parts together; moves them according to juſt harmony and proportion; and produces true felicity as the reſult of their conſpiring order.

While thou haſt ſuch an alluring object in view, ſhall that labor and attention, requiſite to the attainment of thy end, ever ſeem burdenſome and intolerable? Know, that this labor itſelf is the chief ingredient of the felicity to which thou aſpireſt, and that every enjoyment ſoon becomes inſipid and diſtaſteful, when not acquired by fatigue and induſtry. See the hardy hunters riſe from their downy couches, ſhake off the ſlumbers which ſtill weigh down their heavy eye-lids, and ere *Aurora* has yet covered the heavens with her flaming mantle, haſten to the foreſt. They leave behind, in their own houſes, and in the neighbouring plains, animals of every kind, whoſe fleſh furniſhes the moſt delicious fare, and which offer themſelves to the fatal ſtroke. Laborious man diſdains ſo eaſy a purchaſe. He ſeeks for a prey which hides itſelf from his ſearch, or flies from his purſuit, or defends itſelf from his violence. Having exerted in the chaſe every paſſion of the mind, and every member of the body, he then finds the charms of repoſe, and with joy compares its pleaſures to thoſe of his engaging labors.

And can vigorous induſtry give pleaſure to the purſuit even of the moſt worthleſs prey which frequently eſçapes our toils? And cannot the ſame induſtry render the cultivating of our mind, the moderating of our paſſions, the enlightening of reaſon, an agreeable occupation; while we are every day ſenſible of our progreſs, and behold our inward features and countenance brightening inceſſantly with new charms? Begin by curing

yourſelf of this lethargic indolence; the taſk is not difficult: You need but taſte the ſweets of honeſt labor. Proceed to learn the juſt value of every purſuit; long ſtudy is not requiſite: Compare, though but for once, the mind to the body, virtue to fortune, and glory to pleaſure. You will then perceive the advantages of induſtry; You will then be ſenſible what are the proper objects of your induſtry.

In vain do you ſeek repoſe from beds of roſes: In vain do you hope for enjoyment from the moſt delicious wines and fruits. Your indolence itſelf becomes a fatigue: Your pleaſure itſelf creates diſguſt. The mind, unexerciſed, finds every delight inſipid and loathſome; and ere yet the body, full of noxious humors, feels the torment of its multiplied diſeaſes, your nobler part is ſenſible of the invading poiſon, and ſeeks in vain to relieve its anxiety by new pleaſures, which ſtill augment the fatal malady.

I need not tell you, that, by this eager purſuit of pleaſure, you more and more expoſe yourſelf to fortune and accidents, and rivet your affections on external objects, which chance may, in a moment, raviſh from you. I ſhall ſuppoſe, that your indulgent ſtars favor you ſtill with the enjoyment of your riches and poſſeſſions. I prove to you, that even in the midſt of your luxurious pleaſures you are unhappy; and that by too much indulgence, you are incapable of enjoying what proſperous fortune ſtill allows you to poſſeſs.

But ſurely the inſtability of fortune is a conſideration not to be overlooked or neglected. Happineſs cannot poſſibly exiſt where there is no ſecurity;

and ſecurity can have no place where fortune has any dominion. Though that unſtable deity ſhould not exert her rage againſt you, the dread of it would ſtill torment you; would diſturb your ſlumbers, haunt your dreams, and throw a damp on the jollity of your moſt delicious banquets.

The temple of wiſdom is ſeated on a rock, above the rage of the fighting elements, and inacceſſible to all the malice of man. The rolling thunder breaks below; and thoſe more terrible inſtruments of human fury reach not to ſo ſublime a height. The ſage, while he breathes that ſerene air, looks down with pleaſure, mixed with compaſſion, on the errors of miſtaken mortals, who blindly ſeek for the true path of life, and purſue riches, nobility, honor, or power, for genuine felicity. The greater part he beholds diſappointed of their fond wiſhes: Some, lament, that having once poſſeſſed the object of their deſires, it is raviſhed from them by envious fortune: And all complain, that even their own views, though granted, cannot give them happineſs, or relieve the anxiety of their diſtracted minds.

But does the ſage always preſerve himſelf in this philoſophical indifference, and reſt contented with lamenting the miſeries of mankind, without ever employing himſelf for their relief? Does he conſtantly indulge this ſevere wiſdom, which, by pretending to elevate him above human accidents, does in reality harden his heart, and render him careleſs of the intereſts of mankind and of ſociety? No; he knows that in this ſullen *Apathy*, neither true

wiſdom

wiſdom nor true happineſs can be found. He feels too ſtrongly the charm of the ſocial affections ever to counteract ſo ſweet, ſo natural, ſo virtuous a propenſity. Even when, bathed in tears, he laments the miſeries of the human race, of his country, of his friends, and unable to give ſuccour, can only relieve them by compaſſion; he yet rejoices in the generous diſpoſition, and feels a ſatisfaction ſuperior to that of the moſt indulged ſenſe. So engaging are the ſentiments of humanity, that they brighten up the very face of ſorrow, and operate like the ſun, which, ſhining on a duſky cloud or falling rain, paints on them the moſt glorious colors which are to be found in the whole circle of nature.

But it is not here alone that the ſocial virtues diſplay their energy. With whatever ingredient you mix them they are ſtill predominant. As ſorrow cannot overcome them, ſo neither can ſenſual pleaſure obſcure them. The joys of love, however tumultuous, baniſh not the tender ſentiments of ſympathy and affection. They even derive their chief influence from that generous paſſion; and when preſented alone, afford nothing to the unhappy mind but laſſitude and diſguſt. Behold this ſprightly debauchee, who profeſſes a contempt of all other pleaſures but thoſe of wine and jollity. Separate him from his companions, like a ſpark from a fire, where before it contributed to the general blaze, his alacrity ſuddenly extinguiſhes; and, though ſurrounded with every other means of delight, he lothes the ſumptuous banquet, and

prefers even the moſt abſtracted ſtudy and ſpeculations as more agreeable and entertaining.

But the ſocial paſſions never afford ſuch tranſporting pleaſures, or make ſo glorious an appearance in the eyes both of God and man, as when, ſhaking off every earthly mixture, they aſſociate themſelves with the ſentiments of virtue, and prompt us to laudable and worthy actions. As harmonious colors mutually give and receive a luſtre by their friendly union; ſo do theſe ennobling ſentiments of the human mind. See the triumph of nature in parental affection! What ſelfiſh paſſion; what ſenſual delight is a match for it! whether a man exults in the proſperity and virtue of his offſpring, or flies to their ſuccour, through the moſt threatening and tremendous dangers?

Proceed ſtill in purifying the generous paſſion, you will ſtill the more admire its ſhining glories. What charms are there in the harmony of minds, and in a friendſhip founded on mutual eſteem and gratitude! What ſatisfaction in relieving the diſtreſſed, in comforting the afflicted, in raiſing the fallen, and in ſtopping the career of cruel fortune, or of more cruel man, in their inſults over the good and virtuous! But what ſupreme joy in the victories over vice as well as miſery, when by virtuous example or wiſe exhortation, our fellow-creatures are taught to govern their paſſions, reform their vices, and ſubdue their worſt enemies, which inhabit within their own boſoms?

But theſe objects are ſtill too limited for the human mind, which, being of celeſtial origin, ſwells

with the divineſt and moſt enlarged affections, and, carrying its attention beyond kindred and acquaintance, extends its benevolent wiſhes to the moſt diſtant poſterity. It views liberty and laws as the ſource of human happineſs, and devotes itſelf, with the utmoſt alacrity, to their guardianſhip and protection. Toils, dangers, death itſelf, carry their charms, when we brave them for the public good, and ennoble that being which we generouſly ſacrifice for the intereſts of our country. Happy the man whom indulgent fortune allows to pay to virtue what he owes to nature, and to make a generous gift of what muſt otherwiſe be raviſhed from him by cruel neceſſity!

In the true ſage and patriot are united whatever can diſtinguiſh human nature, or elevate mortal man to a reſemblance with the divinity. The ſofteſt benevolence, the moſt undaunted reſolution, the tendereſt ſentiments, the moſt ſublime love of virtue, all theſe animate ſucceſſively his tranſported boſom. What ſatisfaction, when he looks within, to find the moſt turbulent paſſions tuned to juſt harmony and concord, and every jarring ſound baniſhed from this enchanting muſic! If the contemplation, even of inanimate beauty, is ſo delightful; if it raviſhes the ſenſes, even when the fair form is foreign to us: what muſt be the effects of moral beauty? And what influence muſt it have when it embelliſhes our own mind, and is the reſult of our own reflection and induſtry?

But where is the reward of virtue? And what recompence has nature provided for ſuch important ſacrifices

as thoſe of life and fortune, which we muſt often make to it? Oh, ſons of earth! are ye ignorant of the value of this celeſtial miſtreſs? And do ye meanly inquire for her portion, when ye obſerve her genuine charms? But know, that nature has been indulgent to human weakneſs, and has not left this favorite child naked and unendowed. She has provided virtue with the richeſt dowry; but being careful leſt the allurements of intereſt ſhould engage ſuch ſuitors as were inſenſible of the native worth of ſo divine a beauty, ſhe has wiſely provided, that this dowry can have no charms but in the eyes of thoſe who are already tranſported with the love of virtue. Glory is the portion of virtue, the ſweet reward of honorable toils, the triumphant crown which covers the thoughtful head of the diſintereſted patriot, or the duſty brow of the victorious warrior. Elevated by ſo ſublime a prize, the man of virtue looks down with contempt on all the allurements of pleaſure, and all the menaces of danger. Death itſelf loſes its terrors, when he conſiders, that its dominion extends only over a part of him; and that, in ſpite of death andtime, the rage of the elements, and the endleſs viciſſitude of human affairs, he is aſſured of an immortal fame among all the ſons of men.

There ſurely is a Being who preſides over the univerſe; and who, with infinite wiſdom and power, has reduced the jarring elements into juſt order and proportion. Let ſpeculative reaſoners diſpute how far this beneficent Being extends his care, and whether he prolongs our exiſtence beyond

the grave, in order to beſtow on virtue its juſt reward, and render it fully triumphant. The man of morals, without deciding any thing on ſo dubious a ſubject, is ſatisfied with the portion marked out to him by the Supreme Diſpoſer of all things. Gratefully he accepts of that farther reward prepared for him; but if diſappointed, he thinks not virtue an empty name; but, juſtly eſteeming it its own reward, he gratefully acknowledges the bounty of his Creator, who, by calling him into exiſtence, has thereby afforded him an opportunity of once acquiring ſo invaluable a poſſeſſion.

ESSAY XVII.

THE PLATONIST[1].

TO ſome philoſophers it appears matter of ſurpriſe, that all mankind, poſſeſſing the ſame nature, and being endowed with the ſame faculties, ſhould yet differ ſo widely in their purſuits and inclinations, and that one ſhould utterly condemn what is fondly ſought after by another. To ſome it appears matter of ſtill more ſurpriſe, that a man ſhould differ ſo widely from himſelf at different times; and, after poſſeſſion, reject with diſdain what before was the object of all his vows and wiſhes. To me, this feveriſh uncertainty and irreſolution in human conduct ſeems altogether unavoidable; nor

[1] Or, the man of contemplation and *philoſophical* devotion.

can a rational ſoul, made for the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and of his works, ever enjoy tranquillity or ſatisfaction, while detained in the ignoble purſuits of ſenſual pleaſure or popular applauſe. The divinity is a boundleſs ocean of bliſs and glory: Human minds are ſmaller ſtreams, which, ariſing at firſt from this ocean, ſeek ſtill, amid all their wanderings, to return to it, and to loſe themſelves in that immenſity of perfection. When checked in this natural courſe by vice or folly, they become furious and enraged, and ſwelling to a torrent, do then ſpread horror and devaſtation on the neighbouring plains

In vain, by pompous phraſe and paſſionate expreſſion, each recommends his own purſuit, and invites the credulous hearers to an imitation of his life and manners. The heart belies the countenance, and ſenſibly feels, even amid the higheſt ſucceſs, the unſatisfactory nature of all thoſe pleaſures which detain it from its true object. I examine the voluptuous man before enjoyment; I meaſure the vehemence of his deſire and the importance of his object; I find that all his happineſs proceeds only from that hurry of thought which takes him from himſelf, and turns his view from his guilt and miſery. I conſider him a moment after; he has now enjoyed the pleaſure which he fondly ſought after. The ſenſe of his guilt and miſery returns upon him with double anguiſh: His mind tormented with fear and remorſe; his body depreſſed with diſguſt and ſatiety.

But a more auguſt, at leaſt a more haughty perſon-

age, preſents himſelf boldly to our cenſure; and, aſſuming the title of a philoſopher and man of morals, offers to ſubmit to the moſt rigid examination. He challenges with a viſible, though concealed impatience, our approbation and applauſe; and ſeems offended that we ſhould heſitate a moment before we break out into admiration of his virtue. Seeing this impatience, I heſitate ſtill more: I begin to examine the motives of his ſeeming virtue: But behold! ere I can enter upon this inquiry, he flings himſelf from me; and, addreſſing his diſcourſe to that crowd of heedleſs auditors, fondly abuſes them by his magnificent pretenſions.

O philoſopher! thy wiſdom is vain, and thy virtue unprofitable. Thou ſeekeſt the ignorant applauſes of men, not the ſolid reflections of thy own conſcience, or the more ſolid approbation of that Being, who, with one regard of his all-ſeeing eye, penetrates the univerſe. Thou ſurely art conſcious of the hollowneſs of thy pretended probity, whilſt calling thyſelf a citizen, a ſon, a friend, thou forgetteſt thy higher ſovereign, thy true father, thy greateſt benefactor. Where is the adoration due to infinite perfection, whence every thing good and valuable is derived? Where is the gratitude owing to thy Creator, who called thee forth from nothing, who placed thee in all theſe relations to thy fellow-creatures, and requiring thee to fulfil the duty of each relation, forbids thee to neglect what thou oweſt to himſelf, the moſt perfect being, to whom thou art connected by the cloſeſt tie?

But thou art thyſelf thy own idol: Thou worſhippeſt thy *imaginary* perfections: Or rather, ſenſible of thy *real* imperfections, thou ſeekeſt only to deceive the world, and to pleaſe thy fancy, by multiplying thy ignorant admirers. Thus, not content with neglecting what is moſt excellent in the univerſe, thou deſireſt to ſubſtitute in his place what is moſt vile and contemptible.

Conſider all the works of men's hands; all the inventions of human wit; in which thou affecteſt ſo nice a diſcernment: Thou wilt find, that the moſt perfect production ſtill proceeds from the moſt perfect thought, and that it is Mind alone which we admire, while we beſtow our applauſe on the graces of a well-proportioned ſtatue, or the ſymmetry of a noble pile. The ſtatuary, the architect comes ſtill in view, and makes us reflect on the beauty of his art and contrivance, which, from a heap of unformed matter, could extract ſuch expreſſions and proportions. This ſuperior beauty of thought and intelligence thou thyſelf acknowledgeſt, while thou inviteſt us to contemplate, in thy conduct, the harmony of affections, the dignity of ſentiments, and all thoſe graces of a mind, which chiefly merit our attention. But why ſtoppeſt thou ſhort? Seeſt thou nothing farther that is valuable? Amid thy rapturous applauſes of beauty and order, art thou ſtill ignorant where is to be found the moſt conſummate beauty, the moſt perfect order? Compare the works of art with thoſe of nature. The one are but imitations of the other. The nearer art approaches to nature, the

more perfect is it eſteemed. But ſtill, how wide are its neareſt approaches, and what an immenſe interval may be obſerved between them? Art copies only the outſide of nature, leaving the inward and more admirable ſprings and principles; as exceeding her imitation; as beyond her comprehenſion. Art copies only the minute productions of nature, deſpairing to reach that grandeur and magnificence, which are ſo aſtoniſhing in the maſterly works of her original. Can we then be ſo blind as not to diſcover an intelligence and a deſign in the exquiſite and moſt ſtupendous contrivance of the univerſe? Can we be ſo ſtupid as not to feel the warmeſt raptures of worſhip and adoration, upon the contemplation of that intelligent being, ſo infinitely good and wiſe?

The moſt perfect happineſs, ſurely, muſt ariſe from the contemplation of the moſt perfect object. But what more perfect than beauty and virtue? And where is beauty to be found equal to that of the univerſe? Or virtue, which can be compared to the benevolence and juſtice of the Deity? If aught can diminiſh the pleaſure of this contemplation, it muſt be either the narrowneſs of our faculties, which conceals from us the greateſt part of theſe beauties and perfections; or the ſhortneſs of our lives, which allows not time ſufficient to inſtruct us in them. But it is our comfort, that, if we employ worthily the faculties here aſſigned us, they will be enlarged in another ſtate of exiſtence, ſo as to render us more ſuitable worſhippers of our Maker: And that the taſk, which can never be finiſhed in time, will be the buſineſs of an eternity.

ESSAY XVIII.

THE SCEPTIC.

I HAVE long entertained a ſuſpicion with regard to the deciſions of philoſophers upon all ſubjects, and found in myſelf a greater inclination to diſpute, than aſſent to their concluſions. There is one miſtake to which they ſeem liable, almoſt without exception; they confine too much their principles, and make no account of that vaſt variety which nature has ſo much affected in all her operations. When a philoſopher has once laid hold of a favorite principle, which perhaps accounts for many natural effects, he extends the ſame principle over the whole creation, and reduces to it every phenomenon, though by the moſt violent and abſurd reaſoning. Our own mind being narrow and contracted, we cannot extend our conception to the variety and extent of nature; but imagine, that ſhe is as much bounded in her operations as we are in our ſpeculation.

But if ever this infirmity of philoſophers is to be ſuſpected on any occaſion, it is in their reaſonings concerning human life, and the methods of attaining happineſs. In that caſe they are led aſtray, not only by the narrowneſs of their underſtandings, but by that alſo of their paſſions. Almoſt every one has a predominant inclination, to which his other deſires and affections ſubmit, and which governs him, though perhaps with ſome intervals,

through the whole courſe of his life. It is difficult for him to apprehend, that any thing which appears totally indifferent to him, can ever give enjoyment to any perſon, or can poſſeſs charms which altogether eſcape his obſervation. His own purſuits are always, in his account, the moſt engaging; the objects of his paſſion, the moſt valuable; and the road which he purſues, the only one that leads to happineſs.

But would theſe prejudiced reaſoners reflect a moment, there are many obvious inſtances and arguments ſufficient to undeceive them, and make them enlarge their maxims and principles. Do they not ſee the vaſt variety of inclinations and purſuits among our ſpecies; where each man ſeems fully ſatisfied with his own courſe of life, and would eſteem it the greateſt unhappineſs to be confined to that of his neighbour? Do they not feel in themſelves, that what pleaſes at one time diſpleaſes at another, by the change of inclination; and that it is not in their power, by their utmoſt efforts, to recal that taſte or appetite which formerly beſtowed charms on what now appears indifferent or diſagreeable? What is the meaning therefore of thoſe general preferences of the town or country-life, of a life of action or one of pleaſure, of retirement or ſociety; when, beſides the different inclinations of different men, every one's experience may convince him, that each of theſe kinds of life is agreeable in its turn, and that their variety or their judicious mixture chiefly contributes to the rendering all of them agreeable?

But ſhall this buſineſs be allowed to go altogether

at adventures? And muſt a man conſult only his humor and inclination, in order to determine his courſe of life, without employing his reaſon to inform him what road is preferable, and leads moſt ſurely to happineſs? Is there no difference then between one man's conduct and another?

I anſwer, there is a great difference. One man, following his inclination, in chuſing his courſe of life, may employ much ſurer means for ſucceeding than another, who is led by his inclination into the ſame courſe of life, and purſues the ſame object. *Are riches the chief object of your deſires?* Acquire ſkill in your profeſſion; be diligent in the exerciſe of it; enlarge the circle of your friends and acquaintance; avoid pleaſure and expenſe; and never be generous but with a view of gaining more than you could ſave by frugality. *Would you acquire the public eſteem?* Guard equally againſt the extremes of arrogance and fawning. Let it appear that you ſet a value upon yourſelf, but without deſpiſing others. If you fall into either of the extremes, you either provoke men's pride by your inſolence, or teach them to deſpiſe you by your timorous ſubmiſſion, and by the mean opinion which you ſeem to entertain of yourſelf.

Theſe you ſay, are the maxims of common prudence and diſcretion; what every parent inculcates on his child; and what every man of ſenſe purſues in the courſe of life which he has choſen. — What is it then you deſire more? Do you come to a philoſopher as to a *cunning man*, o learn ſomething by magic or witchcraft, beyond what can be known by common prudence and diſcretion? — Yes; we

come to a philoſopher to be inſtructed, how we ſhall chuſe our ends, more than the means for attaining theſe ends: We want to know what deſire we ſhall gratify, what paſſion we ſhall comply with, what appetite we ſhall indulge. As to the reſt, we truſt to common ſenſe, and the general maxims of the world for our inſtruction.

I am ſorry then I have pretended to be a philoſopher: For I find your queſtions very perplexing: and am in danger, if my anſwer be too rigid and ſevere, of paſſing for a pedant and ſcholaſtic; if it be too eaſy and free, of being taken for a preacher of vice and immorality. However, to ſatisfy you, I ſhall deliver my opinion upon the matter, and ſhall only deſire you to eſteem it of as little conſequence as I do myſelf. By that means you will neither think it worthy of your ridicule nor your anger.

If we can depend upon any principle which we learn from philoſophy, this, I think, may be conſidered as certain and undoubted, that there is nothing in itſelf valuable or deſpicable, deſirable or hateful, beautiful or deformed; but that theſe attributes ariſe from the particular conſtitution and fabric of human ſentiment and affection. What ſeems the moſt delicious food to one animal appears loathſome to another: What affects the feeling of one with delight, produces uneaſineſs in another. This is confeſſedly the caſe with regard to all the bodily ſenſes: But if we examine the matter more accurately, we ſhall find, that the ſame obſervation holds even where the mind concurs with the body, and mingles its ſentiment with the exterior appetite.

Deſire this paſſionate lover to give you a character of his miſtreſs: He will tell you, that he is at a loſs for words to deſcribe her charms, and will aſk you very ſeriouſly, if ever you were acquainted with a goddeſs or an angel? If you anſwer that you never were: He will then ſay, that it is impoſſible for you to form a conception of ſuch divine beauties as thoſe which his charmer poſſeſſes; ſo complete a ſhape; ſuch well-proportioned features, ſo engaging an air; ſuch ſweetneſs of diſpoſition; ſuch gaiety of humor. You can infer nothing, however, from all this diſcourſe, but that the poor man is in love; and that the general appetite between the ſexes, which nature has infuſed into all animals, is in him determined to a particular object by ſome qualities, which give him pleaſure. The ſame divine creature, not only to a different animal, but alſo to a different man, appears a mere mortal being, and is beheld with the utmoſt indifference.

Nature has given all animals a like prejudice in favor of their offspring. As ſoon as the helpleſs infant ſees the light, though in every other eye it appears a deſpicable and a miſerable creature, it is regarded by its fond parent with the utmoſt affection, and is preferred to every other object, however perfect and accompliſhed. The paſſion alone, ariſing from the original ſtructure and formation of human nature, beſtows a value on the moſt inſignificant object.

We may puſh the ſame obſervation further, and may conclude, that even when the mind operates alone, and feeling the ſentiment of blame or approbation, pronounces one object deformed and odious,

another beautiful and amiable: I ſay, that even in this caſe, thoſe qualities are not really in the objects, but belong entirely to the ſentiment of that mind which blames or praiſes. I grant, that it will be more difficult to make this propoſition evident, and, as it were, palpable to negligent thinkers; becauſe nature is more uniform in the ſentiments of the mind than in moſt feelings of the body, and produces a nearer reſemblance in the inward than in the outward part of human kind. There is ſomething approaching to principles in mental taſte; and critics can reaſon and diſpute more plauſibly than cooks or perfumers. We may obſerve, however, that this uniformity among human kind hinders not, but that there is a conſiderable diverſity in the ſentiments of beauty and worth; and that education, cuſtom, prejudice, caprice, and humor, frequently vary our taſte of this kind. You will never convince a man who is not accuſtomed to Italian muſic, and has not an ear to follow its intricacies, that a Scotch tune is not preferable. You have not even any ſingle argument, beyond your own taſte, which you can employ in your behalf: And to your antagoniſt, his particular taſte will always appear a more convincing argument to the contrary. If you be wiſe, each of you will allow that the other may be in the right; and having many other inſtances of this diverſity of taſte, you will both confeſs, that beauty and worth are merely of a relative nature, and conſiſt in an agreeable ſentiment, produced by an object in a particular mind, according to the peculiar ſtructure and conſtitution of that mind.

By this diverſity of ſentiment, obſervable in human kind, nature has perhaps intended to make us ſenſible of her authority, and let us ſee what ſurpriſing changes ſhe could produce on the paſſions and deſires of mankind, merely by the change of their inward fabric, without any alteration on the objects. The vulgar may even be convinced by this argument: But men, accuſtomed to thinking, may draw a more convincing, at leaſt a more general argument, from the very nature of the ſubject.

In the operation of reaſoning, the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are ſuppoſed to ſtand in reality, without adding any thing to them, or diminiſhing any thing from them. If I examine the Ptolomaic and Copernican ſyſtems, I endeavour only, by my inquiries, to know the real ſituation of the planets; that is, in other words, I endeavour to give them, in my conception, the ſame relations that they bear towards each other in the heavens. To this operation of the mind, therefore, there ſeems to be always a real, though often an unknown ſtandard, in the nature of things; nor is truth or falſhood variable by the various apprehenſions of mankind. Though all human race ſhould for ever conclude, that the ſun moves, and the earth remains at reſt, the ſun ſtirs not an inch from his place for all theſe reaſonings; and ſuch concluſions are eternally falſe and erroneous.

But the caſe is not the ſame with the qualities of *beautiful and deformed*, *deſirable and odious*, as with truth and falſhood. In the former caſe, the mind is not content with merely ſurveying its objects as they

ſtand

ſtand in themſelves; it alſo feels a ſentiment of delight or uneaſineſs, approbation or blame, conſequent to that ſurvey; and this ſentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful or deformed, deſirable or odious.* Now, it is evident, that this ſentiment muſt depend upon the particular fabric or ſtructure of the mind, which enables ſuch particular forms to operate in ſuch a particular manner, and produces a ſympathy or conformity between the mind and its objects. Vary the ſtructure of the mind or inward organs, the ſentiment no longer follows, though the forms remain the ſame. The ſentiment being different from the object, and ariſing from its operation upon the organs of the mind, an alteration upon the latter muſt vary the effect, nor can the ſame object, preſented to a mind totally different, produce the ſame ſentiment.

This concluſion every one is apt to draw of himſelf without much philoſophy, where the ſentiment is evidently diſtinguiſhable from the object. Who is not ſenſible, that power, and glory, and vengeance, are not deſirable of themſelves, but derive all their value from the ſtructure of human paſſions, which begets a deſire towards ſuch particular purſuits? But with regard to beauty, either natural or moral, the caſe is commonly ſuppoſed to be different. The agreeable quality is thought to lie in the object, not in the ſentiment; and that merely becauſe the ſentiment is not ſo turbulent and violent as to diſtinguiſh itſelf, in an evident manner, from the perception of the object.

But a little reflection ſuffices to diſtinguiſh them. A man may know exactly all the circles and ellipſes

of the Copernican ſyſtem, and all the irregular ſpirals of the Ptolomaic, without perceiving that the former is more beautiful than the latter. Euclid has fully explained every quality of the circle, but has not, in any propoſition, ſaid a word of its beauty. The reaſon is evident. Beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line, *whoſe* parts are all equally diſtant from a common centre. It is only the effect which that figure produces upon a mind, whoſe particular fabric or ſtructure renders it ſuſceptible of ſuch ſentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or ſeek it, either by your ſenſes or by mathematical reaſonings, in all the properties of that figure.

The mathematician, who took no other pleaſure in reading Virgil, but that of examining Eneas's voyage by the map, might perfectly underſtand the meaning of every Latin word employed by that divine author; and conſequently, might have a diſtinct idea of the whole narration. He would even have a more diſtinct idea of it, than they could attain who had not ſtudied ſo exactly the geography of the poem. He knew, therefore, every thing in the poem: But he was ignorant of its beauty; becauſe the beauty, properly ſpeaking, lies not in the poem, but in the ſentiment or taſte of the reader. And where a man has no ſuch delicacy of temper, as to make him feel this ſentiment, he muſt be ignorant of the beauty, though poſſeſſed of the ſcience and underſtanding of an angel [1].

[1] See NOTE [F].

The inference upon the whole is, that it is not from the value or worth of the object, which any perſon purſues, that we can determine his enjoyment, but merely from the paſſion with which he purſues it, and the ſucceſs which he meets with in his purſuit. Objects have abſolutely no worth or value in themſelves. They derive their worth merely from the paſſion. If that be ſtrong, and ſteady, and ſucceſsful, the perſon is happy. It cannot reaſonably be doubted, but a little miſs, dreſſed in a new gown for a dancing-ſchool-ball, receives as complete enjoyment as the greateſt orator, who triumphs in the ſplendor of his eloquence, while he governs the paſſions and reſolutions of a numerous aſſembly.

All the difference, therefore, between one man and another with regard to life, conſiſts either in the *paſſion* or in the *enjoyment:* And theſe differences are ſufficient to produce the wide extremes of happineſs and miſery.

To be happy, the *paſſion* muſt neither be too violent nor too remiſs. In the firſt caſe, the mind is in a perpetual hurry and tumult; in the ſecond, it ſinks into a diſagreeable indolence and lethargy.

To be happy, the paſſion muſt be benign and ſocial; not rough or fierce. The affections of the latter kind are not near ſo agreeable to the feeling as thoſe of the former. Who will compare rancor and animoſity, envy and revenge, to friendſhip, benignity, clemency, and gratitude?

To be happy, the paſſion muſt be cheerful and gay, not gloomy and melancholy. A propenſity

to hope and joy is real riches; one to fear and ſorrow, real poverty.

Some paſſions or inclinations, in the *enjoyment* of their object, are not ſo ſteady or conſtant as others, nor convey ſuch durable pleaſure and ſatisfaction. *Philoſophical devotion*, for inſtance, like the enthuſiaſm of a poet, is the tranſitory effect of high ſpirits, great leiſure, a fine genius, and a habit of ſtudy and contemplation: But notwithſtanding all theſe circumſtances, an abſtract, inviſible object, like that which *natural* religion alone preſents to us, cannot long actuate the mind, or be of any moment in life. To render the paſſion of countenance, we muſt find ſome method of affecting the ſenſes and imagination, and muſt embrace ſome *hiſtorical* as well as *philoſophical* account of the divinity. Popular ſuperſtitions and obſervances are even found to be of uſe in this particular.

Though the tempers of men be very different, yet we may ſafely pronounce in general, that a life of pleaſure cannot ſupport itſelf ſo long as one of buſineſs, but is much more ſubject to ſatiety and diſguſt. The amuſements which are the moſt durable, have all a mixture of application and attention in them; ſuch as gaming and hunting. And in general, buſineſs and action fill up all the great vacancies in human life.

But where the temper is the beſt diſpoſed for any *enjoyment*, the object is often wanting: And in this reſpect, the paſſions which purſue external objects contribute not ſo much to happineſs, as

thoſe which reſt in ourſelves; ſince we are neither ſo certain of attaining ſuch objects nor ſo ſecure in poſſeſſing them. A paſſion for learning is preferable, with regard to happineſs, to one for riches.

Some men are poſſeſſed of great ſtrength of mind; and even when they purſue *external* objects, are not much affected by a diſappointment, but renew their application and induſtry with the greateſt cheerfulneſs. Nothing contributes more to happineſs than ſuch a turn of mind.

According to this ſhort and imperfect ſketch of human life, the happieſt diſpoſition of mind is the *virtuous;* or, in other words, that which leads to action and employment, renders us ſenſible to the ſocial paſſions, ſteels the heart againſt the aſſaults of fortune, reduces the affections to a juſt moderation, makes our own thoughts an entertainment to us, and inclines us rather to the pleaſures of ſociety and converſation, than to thoſe of the ſenſes. This, in the mean time, muſt be obvious to the moſt careleſs reaſoner, that all diſpoſitions of mind are not alike favorable to happineſs, and that one paſſion or humor may be extremely deſirable, while another is equally diſagreeable. And indeed, all the difference between the conditions of life depends upon the mind; nor is there any one ſituation of affairs, in itſelf, preferable to another. Good and ill, both natural and moral, are entirely relative to human ſentiment and affection. No man would ever be unhappy, could he alter his feelings. Proteus-like, he would elude all attacks, by the continual alterations of his ſhape and form.

But of this reſource, nature has, in a great meaſure, deprived us. The fabric and conſtitution of our mind no more depends on our choice than that of our body. The generality of men have not even the ſmalleſt notion, that any alteration in this reſpect can ever be deſirable. As a ſtream neceſſarily follows the ſeveral inclinations of the ground on which it runs; ſo are the ignorant and thoughtleſs part of mankind actuated by their natural propenſities. Such are effectually excluded from all pretenſions to philoſophy, and the *medicine of the mind*, ſo much boaſted. But even upon the wiſe and thoughtful, nature has a prodigious influence; nor is it always in a man's power, by the utmoſt art and induſtry, to correct his temper, and attain that virtuous character to which he aſpires. The empire of philoſophy extends over a few; and with regard to theſe too, her authority is very weak and limited. Men may well be ſenſible of the value of virtue, and may deſire to attain it; but it is not always certain that they will be ſucceſsful in their wiſhes.

Whoever conſiders, without prejudice, the courſe of human actions, will find, that mankind are almoſt entirely guided by conſtitution and temper, and that general maxims have little influence, but ſo far as they affect our taſte or ſentiment. If a man have a lively ſenſe of honor and virtue, with moderate paſſions, his conduct will always be conformable to the rules of morality; or if he depart from them, his return will be eaſy and expeditious. On the other hand,

where one is born of ſo perverſe a frame of mind, of ſo callous and inſenſible a diſpoſition, as to have no reliſh for virtue or humanity, no ſympathy with his fellow-creatures, no deſire of eſteem and applauſe; ſuch a one muſt be allowed entirely incurable, nor is there any remedy in philoſophy. He reaps no ſatisfaction but from low and ſenſual objects, or from the indulgence of malignant paſſions: He feels no remorſe to control his vicious inclinations: He has not even that ſenſe or taſte which is requiſite to make him deſire a better character. For my part, I know not how I ſhould addreſs myſelf to ſuch a one, or by what arguments I ſhould endeavour to reform him. Should I tell him of the inward ſatisfaction which reſults from laudable and humane actions, the delicate pleaſure of diſintereſted love and friendſhip, the laſting enjoyments of a good name and an eſtabliſhed character, he might ſtill reply, that theſe were perhaps pleaſures to ſuch as were ſuſceptible of them; but that, for his part, he finds himſelf of a quite different turn and diſpoſition. I muſt repeat it; my philoſophy affords no remedy in ſuch a caſe, nor could I do any thing but lament this perſon's unhappy condition. But then I aſk, if any other philoſophy can afford a remedy; or if it be poſſible, by any ſyſtem, to render all mankind virtuous, however perverſe may be their natural frame of mind? Experience will ſoon convince us of the contrary; and I venture to affirm, that perhaps the chief benefit which reſults from

philoſophy, ariſes in an indirect manner, and proceeds more from its ſecret, inſenſible influence, than from its immediate application.

It is certain, that a ſerious attention to the ſciences and liberal arts ſoftens and humanizes the temper, and cheriſhes thoſe fine emotions, in which true virtue and honor conſiſt. It rarely, very rarely happens, that a man of taſte and learning is not, at leaſt, an honeſt man, whatever frailties may attend him. The bent of his mind to ſpeculative ſtudies muſt mortify in him the paſſions of intereſt and ambition, and muſt at the ſame time give him a greater ſenſibility of all the decencies and duties of life. He feels more fully a moral diſtinction in characters and manners; nor is his ſenſe of this kind diminiſhed, but, on the contrary, it is much increaſed by ſpeculation.

Beſides ſuch inſenſible changes upon the temper and diſpoſition, it is highly probable that others may be produced by ſtudy and application. The prodigious effects of education may convince us, that the mind is not altogether ſtubborn and inflexible, but will admit of many alterations from its original make and ſtructure. Let a man propoſe to himſelf the model of a character which he approves; let him be well acquainted with thoſe particulars in which his own character deviates from this model; let him keep a conſtant watch over himſelf, and bend his mind, by a continual effort, from the vices towards the virtues; and I doubt not but, in time, he will find in his temper an alteration for the better.

Habit is another powerful means of reforming the mind, and implanting in it good diſpoſitions and inclinations. A man who continues in a courſe of ſobriety and temperance, will hate riot and diſorder: If he engage in buſineſs or ſtudy, indolence will ſeem a puniſhment to him: If he conſtrain himſelf to practiſe beneficence and affability, he will ſoon abhor all inſtances of pride and violence. Where one is thoroughly convinced that the virtuous courſe of life is preferable; if he have but reſolution enough, for ſome time, to impoſe a violence on himſelf; his reformation needs not be deſpaired of. The misfortune is, that this conviction and this reſolution never can have place, unleſs a man be before-hand tolerably virtuous.

Here then is the chief triumph of art and philoſophy: It inſenſibly refines the temper, and it points out to us thoſe diſpoſitions which we ſhould endeavour to attain, by a conſtant *bent* of mind and by repeated *habit*. Beyond this I cannot acknowledge it to have great influence; and I muſt entertain doubts concerning all thoſe exhortations and conſolations, which are in ſuch vogue among ſpeculative reaſoners.

We have already obſerved, that no objects are in themſelves deſirable or odious, valuable or deſpicable; but that objects acquire theſe qualities from the particular character and conſtitution of the mind which ſurveys them. To diminiſh, therefore, or augment any perſon's value for an object, to excite or moderate his paſſions, there are no direct arguments or reaſons which can be

employed with any force or influence. The catching of flies, like Domitian, if it give more pleaſure, is preferable to the hunting of wild beaſts, like William Rufus, or conquering of kingdoms like Alexander.

But though the value of every object can be determined only by the ſentiment or paſſion of every individual, we may obſerve, that the paſſion, in pronouncing its verdict, conſiders not the object ſimply as it is in itſelf, but ſurveys it with all the circumſtances which attend it. A man tranſported with joy on account of poſſeſſing a diamond, confines not his view to the gliſtering ſtone before him: he alſo conſiders its rarity; and thence chiefly ariſes his pleaſure and exultation. Here therefore a philoſopher may ſtep in, and ſuggeſt particular views and conſiderations and circumſtances, which otherwiſe would have eſcaped us; by that means, he may either moderate or excite any particular paſſion.

It may ſeem unreaſonable abſolutely to deny the authority of philoſophy in this reſpect: But it muſt be confeſſed, that there lies this ſtrong preſumption againſt it, that, if theſe views be natural and obvious, they would have occurred of themſelves, without the aſſiſtance of philoſophy; if they be not natural, they never can have any influence on the affections. *Theſe* are of a very delicate nature, and cannot be forced or conſtrained by the utmoſt art or induſtry. A conſideration which we ſeek for on purpoſe, which we enter into with difficulty, which we cannot retain without care and

attention, will never produce thoſe genuine and durable movements of paſſion, which are the reſult of nature, and the conſtitution of the mind. A man may as well pretend to cure himſelf of love, by viewing his miſtreſs through the *artificial* medium of a microſcope or proſpect, and beholding there the coarſeneſs of her ſkin, and monſtrous diſproportion of her features, as hope to excite or moderate any paſſion by the *artificial* arguments of a Seneca or an Epictetus. The remembrance of the natural aſpect and ſituation of the object, will in both caſes ſtill recur upon him. The reflections of philoſophy are too ſubtile and diſtant to take place in common life, or eradicate any affection. The air is too fine to breathe in, where it is above the winds and clouds of the atmoſphere.

Another defect of thoſe refined reflections which philoſophy ſuggeſts to us, is, that commonly they cannot diminiſh or extinguiſh our vicious paſſions, without diminiſhing or extinguiſhing ſuch as are virtuous, and rendering the mind totally indifferent and unactive. They are, for the moſt part, general, and are applicable to all our affections. In vain do we hope to direct their influence only to one ſide. If by inceſſant ſtudy and meditation we have rendered them intimate and preſent to us, they will operate throughout, and ſpread an univerſal inſenſibility over the mind. When we deſtroy the nerves, we extinguiſh the ſenſe of pleaſure, together with that of pain, in the human body.

It will be eaſy, by one glance of the eye, to find one or other of theſe defects in moſt of thoſe philoſophical reflections, ſo much celebrated both in ancient and modern times. *Let not the injuries or violence of men*, ſay the philoſophers [2] *ever diſcompoſe you by anger or hatred. Would you be angry at the ape for its malice, or the tiger for its ferority?* This reflection leads us into a bad opinion of human nature, and muſt extinguiſh the ſocial affections. It tends alſo to prevent all remorſe for a man's own crimes; when he conſiders, that vice is as natural to mankind as the particular inſtincts to brute creatures.

All ills ariſe from the order of the univerſe, which is abſolutely perfect. Would you wiſh to diſturb ſo divine an order for the ſake of your own particular intereſt? What if the ills I ſuffer ariſe from malice or oppreſſion? *But the vices and imperfections of men are alſo comprehended in the order of the univerſe:*

If plagues and earthquakes break not hea'n's deſign,
Why then a Borgia *or a* Catiline?

Let this be allowed; and my own vices will alſo be a part of the ſame order.

To one who ſaid, that none were happy who were not above opinion, a Spartan replied, *Then none are happy but knaves and robbers* [3].

Man is born to be miſerable; and is he ſurpriſed

[2] Plut. *De ira cohibenda.*
[3] Plut. *Lacon Apophtheg.*

at any particular misfortune? And can he give way to ſorrow and lamentation upon account of any diſaſter? Yes: He very reaſonably laments that he ſhould be born to be miſerable. Your conſolation preſents a hundred ills for one, of which you pretend to eaſe him.

You ſhould always have before your eyes death, diſeaſe, poverty, blindneſs, exile, calumny, and infamy, as ills which are incident to human nature. If any one of theſe ills fall to your lot, you will bear it the better when you have reckoned upon it. I anſwer, if we confine ourſelves to a general and diſtant reflection on the ills of human life, *that* can have no effect to prepare us for them. If by cloſe and intenſe meditation we render them preſent and intimate to us, *that* is the true ſecret for poiſoning all our pleaſures, and rendering us perpetually miſerable.

Your ſorrow is fruitleſs, and will not change the courſe of deſtiny. Very true: And for that very reaſon I am ſorry.

Cicero's conſolation for deafneſs is ſomewhat curious. *How many languages are there*, ſays he, *which you do not underſtand? The* Punic, Spaniſh, Gallic, Ægyptian, &c. *With regard to all theſe, you are as if you were deaf, yet you are indifferent about the matter. Is it then ſo great a misfortune to be deaf to one language more*[*].

I like better the repartee of Antipater the Cyreniac, when ſome women were condoling with him for his blindneſs: *What!* ſays he, *Do you think there are no pleaſures in the dark?*

[*] Tuſc. *Quæſt.* lib. v.

Nothing can be more deſtructive, ſays Fontenelle, *to ambition, and the paſſion for conqueſt, than the true ſyſtem of aſtronomy. What a poor thing is even the whole globe in compariſon of the infinite extent of nature?* This conſideration is evidently too diſtant ever to have any effect. Or, if it had, would it not deſtroy patriotiſm as well as ambition? The ſame gallant author adds with ſome reaſon, that the bright eyes of the ladies are the only objects which loſe nothing of their luſtre or value from the moſt extenſive views of aſtronomy, but ſtand proof againſt every ſyſtem. Would philoſophers adviſe us to limit our affection to them?

Exile, ſays Plutarch to a friend in baniſhment, *is no evil: Mathematicians tell us, that the whole earth is but a point, compared to the heavens. To change one's country then is little more than to remove from one ſtreet to another. Man is not a plant, rooted to a certain ſpot of earth: All ſoils and all climates are alike ſuited to him*[s]. Theſe topics are admirable, could they fall only into the hands of baniſhed perſons. But what if they come alſo to the knowledge of thoſe who are employed in public affairs, and deſtroy all their attachment to their native country? Or will they operate like the quack's medicine, which is equally good for a diabetes and a dropſy?

It is certain, were a ſuperior being thruſt into a human body, that the whole of life would to him appear ſo mean, contemptible, and puerile, that

[s] *De exilio.*

he never could be induced to take part in any thing, and would ſcarcely give attention to what paſſes around him. To engage him to ſuch a condeſcenſion as to play even the part of a Philip with zeal and alacrity, would be much more difficult than to conſtrain the ſame Philip, after having been a king and a conqueror during fifty years, to mend old ſhoes with proper care and attention; the occupation which Lucian aſſigns him in the infernal regions. Now all the ſame topics of diſdain towards human affairs, which could operate on this ſuppoſed being, occur alſo to the philoſopher; but being in ſome meaſure diſproportioned to human capacity, and not being fortified by the experience of any thing better, they make not a full impreſſion on him. He ſees, but he feels not ſufficiently their truth; and is always a ſublime philoſopher when he needs not; that is, as long as nothing diſturbs him or rouſes his affections. While others play, he wonders at their keenneſs and ardor; but he no ſooner puts in his own ſtake, than he is commonly tranſported with the ſame paſſions that he had ſo much condemned while he remained a ſimple ſpectator.

There are two conſiderations chiefly to be met with in books of philoſophy, from which any important effect is to be expected, and that becauſe theſe conſiderations are drawn from common life, and occur upon the moſt ſuperficial view of human affairs. When we reflect on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, how deſpicable ſeem all our purſuits of happineſs? And even if

we would extend our concern beyond our own life, how frivolous appear our moſt enlarged and moſt generous projects; when we conſider the inceſſant changes and revolutions of human affairs, by which laws and learning, books and governments, are hurried away by time, as by a rapid ſtream, and are loſt in the immenſe ocean of matter? Such a reflection certainly tends to mortify all our paſſions: But does it not thereby counterwork the artifice of nature, who has happily deceived us into an opinion, that human life is of ſome importance? And may not ſuch a reflection be employed with ſucceſs by voluptuous reaſoners, in order to lead us from the paths of action and virtue into the flowery fields of indolence and pleaſure?

We are informed by Thucidydes, that, during the famous plague of Athens, when death ſeemed preſent to every one, a diſſolute mirth and gaiety prevailed among the people, who exhorted one another to make the moſt of life as long as it endured. The ſame obſervation is made by Boccace with regard to the plague of Florence. A like principle makes ſoldiers, during war, be more addicted to riot and expenſe than any other race of men. Preſent pleaſure is always of importance; and whatever diminiſhes the importance of all other objects, muſt beſtow on it an additional influence and value.

The *ſecond* philoſophical conſideration, which may often have an influence on the affections, is derived from a compariſon of our own condition

with

with the condition of others. This compariſon we are continually making, even in common life; but the misfortune is, that we are rather apt to compare our ſituation with that of our ſuperiors than with that of our inferiors. A philoſopher corrects this natural infirmity, by turning his view to the other ſide, in order to render himſelf eaſy in the ſituation to which fortune has confined him. There are few people who are not ſuſceptible of ſome conſolation from this reflection; though, to a very good-natured man, the view of human miſeries ſhould rather produce ſorrow than comfort, and add, to his lamentations for his own misfortunes, a deep compaſſion for thoſe of others. Such is the imperfection, even of the beſt of theſe philoſophical topics of conſolation[G].

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that though virtue be undoubtedly the beſt choice, when it is attainable; yet ſuch is the diſorder and confuſion of human affairs, that no perfect or regular diſtribution of happineſs and miſery is ever in this life to be expected. Not only the goods of fortune and the endowments of the body (both of which are important), not only theſe advantages, I ſay, are unequally divided between the virtuous and vicious, but even the mind itſelf partakes, in ſome degree, of this diſorder; and the moſt worthy character, by the very conſtitution of the paſſions, enjoys not always the higheſt felicity.

[G] See NOTE [G].

It is obſervable, that though every bodily pain proceeds from ſome diſorder in the part or organ, yet the pain is not always proportioned to the diſorder; but is greater or leſs, according to the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the part upon which the noxious humors exert their influence. A *tooth-ach* produces more violent convulſions of pain than a *phthiſis* or a *dropſy*. In like manner, with regard to the economy of the mind, we may obſerve, that all vice is indeed pernicious; yet the diſturbance or pain is not meaſured out by nature with exact proportion to the degree of vice, nor is the man of higheſt virtue, even abſtracting from external accidents, always the moſt happy. A gloomy and melancholy diſpoſition is certainly, *to our ſentiments*, a vice or imperfection; but as it may be accompanied with great ſenſe of honor and great integrity, it may be found in very worthy characters; though it is ſufficient alone to imbitter life, and render the perſon affected with it completely miſerable. On the other hand, a ſelfiſh villain may poſſeſs a ſpring and alacrity of temper, a certain *gaiety of heart*, which is indeed a good quality, but which is rewarded much beyond its merit; and when attended with good fortune, will compenſate for the uneaſineſs and remorſe ariſing from all the other vices.

I ſhall add, as an obſervation to the ſame purpoſe, that if a man be liable to a vice or imperfection, it may often happen, that a good quality which he poſſeſſes along with it, will render him more miſerable than if he were completely vicious.

A perſon of ſuch imbecility of temper as to be eaſily broken by affliction, is more unhappy for being endowed with a generous and friendly diſpoſition, which gives him a lively concern for others and expoſes him the more to fortune and accidents. A ſenſe of ſhame, in an imperfect character, is certainly a virtue; but produces great uneaſineſs and remorſe, from which the abandoned villain is entirely free. A very amorous complexion, with a heart incapable of friendſhip, is happier than the ſame exceſs in love with a generoſity of temper, which tranſports a man beyond himſelf, and renders him a total ſlave to the object of his paſſion.

In a word, human life is more governed by fortune than by reaſon; is to be regarded more as a dull paſtime than as a ſerious occupation; and is more influenced by particular humor than by general principles. Shall we engage ourſelves in it with paſſion and anxiety? It is not worthy of ſo much concern. Shall we be indifferent about what happens? We loſe all the pleaſure of the game by our phlegm and careleſsneſs. While we are reaſoning concerning life; life is gone; and death, though, *perhaps* they receive him differently, yet treats alike the fool and the philoſopher. To reduce life to exact rule and method, is commonly a painful, oft a fruitleſs occupation: And is it not alſo a proof, that we overvalue the prize for which we contend? Even to reaſon ſo carefully concerning it, and to fix with accuracy its juſt idea, would be overvaluing it, were it not that to ſome tempers this occupation is one of the moſt amuſing in which life could poſſibly be employed.

ESSAY XIX.

OF POLYGAMY AND DIVORCES.

As marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual conſent, and has for its end the propagation of the ſpecies, it is evident that it muſt be ſuſceptible of all the variety of conditions which conſent eſtabliſhes, provided they be not contrary to this end.

A man, in conjoining himſelf to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement: In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their ſubſiſtence and education. When he has performed theſe two parts of duty, no one can reproach him with injuſtice or injury. And as the terms of his engagement, as well as the methods of ſubſiſting his offspring, may be various, it is mere ſuperſtition to imagine, that marriage can be entirely uniform, and will admit only of one mode or form. Did not human laws reſtrain the natural liberty of men, every particular marriage would be as different as contracts or bargains of any other kind or ſpecies.

As circumſtances vary, and the laws propoſe different advantages, we find, that in different times and places they impoſe different conditions on this important contract. In Tonquin, it is uſual for the ſailors, when the ſhips come into harbour, to marry for the ſeaſon, and notwithſtanding this precarious engagement, they are aſſured, it is ſaid, of the

ſtricteſt fidelity to their bed, as well as in the whole management of their affairs, from thoſe temporary ſpouſes.

I cannot at preſent recollect my authorities; but I have ſomewhere read, that the republic of Athens, having loſt many of its citizens by war and peſtilence, allowed every man to marry two wives, in order the ſooner to repair the waſte which had been made by theſe calamities. The poet Euripides happened to be coupled to two noiſy Vixens, who ſo plagued him with their jealouſies and quarrels, that he became ever after a profeſſed *woman-hater*; and is the only theatrical writer, perhaps the only poet, that ever entertained an averſion to the ſex.

In that agreeable romance, called *the Hiſtory of the Sevarambians*, where a great many men and a few women are ſuppoſed to be ſhipwrecked on a deſert coaſt; the captain of the troop, in order to obviate thoſe endleſs quarrels which aroſe, regulates their marriages after the following manner: He takes a handſome female to himſelf alone; aſſigns one to every couple of inferior officers; and to five of the loweſt rank he gives one wife in common.

The ancient Britons had a ſingular kind of marriage, to be met with among no other people. Any number of them, as ten or a dozen, joined in a ſociety together, which was perhaps requiſite for mutual defence in thoſe barbarous times. In order to link this ſociety the cloſer, they took an equal number of wives in common; and whatever children were born, were reputed to belong to all of them, and were accordingly provided for by the whole community.

Among the inferior creatures, nature herſelf, being the ſupreme legiſlator, preſcribes all the laws which regulate their marriages, and varies thoſe laws according to the different circumſtances of the creature. Where ſhe furniſhes, with eaſe, food and defence to the new-born animal, the preſent embrace terminates the marriage; and the care of the offſpring is committed entirely to the female. Where the food is of more difficult purchaſe, the marriage continues for one ſeaſon, till the common progeny can provide for itſelf; and then the union immediately diſſolves, and leaves each of the parties free to enter into a new engagement at the enſuing ſeaſon. But nature, having endowed man with reaſon, has not ſo exactly regulated every article of his marriage-contract, but has left him to adjuſt them by his own prudence, according to his particular circumſtances and ſituation. Municipal laws are a ſupply to the wiſdom of each individual; and, at the ſame time, by reſtraining the natural liberty of men, make private intereſt ſubmit to the intereſt of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature; though they are not all equally convenient, or equally uſeful to ſociety. The laws may allow of polygamy, as among the *Eaſtern* nations; or of voluntary divorces, as among the Greeks and Romans; or they may confine one man to one woman, during the whole courſe of their lives, as among the modern Europeans. It may not be diſagreeable to conſider the advantages and diſad-

vantages which reſult from each of theſe inſtitutions.

The advocates for polygamy may recommend it as the only effectual remedy for the diſorders of love, and the only expedient for freeing men from that ſlavery to the females, which the natural violence of our paſſions has impoſed upon us. By this means alone can we regain our right of ſovereignty, and, ſating our appetite, re-eſtabliſh the authority of reaſon in our minds, and of conſequence our own authority in our families. Man, like a weak ſovereign, being unable to ſupport himſelf againſt the wiles and intrigues of his ſubjects, muſt play one faction againſt another, and become abſolute by the mutual jealouſy of the females. *To divide and to govern* is an univerſal maxim; and by neglecting it, the Europeans undergo a more grievous and a more ignominious ſlavery than the Turks or Perſians; who are ſubjected indeed to a ſovereign that lies at a diſtance from them, but in their domeſtic affairs rule with an uncontrollable ſway.

On the other hand, it may be urged with better reaſon, that this ſovereignty of the male is a real uſurpation, and deſtroys that nearneſs of rank, not to ſay equality, which nature has eſtabliſhed between the ſexes. We are by nature their lovers, their friends, their patrons: Would we willingly exchange ſuch endearing appellations for the barbarous title of maſter and tyrant?

In what capacity ſhall we gain by this inhuman

proceeding? As lovers, or as huſbands? The *lover* is totally annihilated; and courtſhip, the moſt agreeable ſcene in life, can no longer have place where women have not the free diſpoſal of themſelves, but are bought and ſold like the meaneſt animal. The *huſband* is as little a gainer, having found the admirable ſecret of extinguiſhing every part of love, except its jealouſy. No roſe without its thorn; but he muſt be a fooliſh wretch indeed, that throws away the roſe and preſerves only the thorn.

But the Aſiatic manners are as deſtructive to friendſhip as to love. Jealouſy excludes men from all intimacies and familiarities with each other. No one dares bring his friend to his houſe or table, leſt he bring a lover to his numerous wives. Hence all over the eaſt, each family is as much ſeparate from another, as if they were ſo many diſtinct kingdoms. No wonder then, that Solomon, living like an eaſtern prince, with his ſeven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, without one friend, could write ſo pathetically concerning the vanity of the world. Had he tried the ſecret of one wife or miſtreſs, a few friends, and a great many companions, he might have found life ſomewhat more agreeable. Deſtroy love and friendſhip; what remains in the world worth accepting?

The bad education of children, eſpecially children of condition, is another unavoidable conſequence of theſe eaſtern inſtitutions. Thoſe who paſs the

early part of life among ſlaves, are only qualified to be themſelves ſlaves and tyrants; and in every future intercourſe, either with their inferiors or ſuperiors, are apt to forget the natural equality of mankind. What attention, too, can it be ſuppoſed a parent, whoſe ſeraglio affords him fifty ſons, will give to inſtilling principles of morality or ſcience into a progeny with whom he himſelf is ſcarcely acquainted, and whom he loves with ſo divided an affection? Barbariſm, therefore, appears from reaſon as well as experience, to be the inſeparable attendant of polygamy.

To render polygamy more odious, I need not recount the frightful effects of jealouſy, and the conſtraint in which it holds the fair ſex all over the eaſt. In thoſe countries men are not allowed to have any commerce with the females, not even phyſicians, when ſickneſs may be ſuppoſed to have extinguiſhed all wanton paſſions in the boſoms of the fair, and at the ſame time has rendered them unfit objects of deſire. Tournefort tells us, that when he was brought into the *grand-ſignor's* ſeraglio as a phyſician, he was not a little ſurpriſed, in looking along a gallery, to ſee a great number of naked arms ſtanding out from the ſides of the room. He could not imagine what this could mean; till he was told, that thoſe arms belonged to bodies which he muſt cure, without knowing any more about them than what he could learn from the arms. He was not allowed to aſk a queſtion of the patient, or even of her attendants,

leſt he might find it neceſſary to inquire concerning circumſtances which the delicacy of the ſeraglio allows not to be revealed. Hence phyſicians in the eaſt pretend to know all diſeaſes from the pulſe; as our quacks in Europe undertake to cure a perſon merely from ſeeing his water. I ſuppoſe, had *Monſieur* Tournefort been of this latter kind, he would not, in Conſtantinople, have been allowed by the jealous Turks to be furniſhed with materials requiſite for exerciſing his art.

In another country, where polygamy is alſo allowed, they render their wives cripples, and make their feet of no uſe to them, in order to confine them to their own houſes. But it will perhaps appear ſtrange, that in an European country, jealouſy can yet be carried to ſuch a height, that it is indecent ſo much as to ſuppoſe that a woman of rank can have feet or legs. Witneſs the following ſtory, which we have from very good authority [1]. When the mother of the late king of Spain was on her road towards Madrid, ſhe paſſed through a little town in Spain, famous for its manufactury of gloves and ſtockings. The magiſtrates of the place thought they could not better expreſs their joy for the reception of their new queen, than by preſenting her with a ſample of thoſe commodities, for which alone their town was remarkable. The *major domo*, who conducted the princeſs, received the gloves very graciouſly; but when the ſtockings were preſented, he flung them away with great indignation, and ſeverely reprimanded the magiſtrates for this

[1] *Mémoires de la cour d'Eſpagne, par Madame d'Aunoy.*

egregious piece of indecency. *Know*, ſays he, *that a queen of Spain has no legs.* The young queen, who at that time underſtood the language but imperfectly, and had often been frightened with ſtories of Spaniſh jealouſy, imagined that they were to cut off her legs. Upon which ſhe fell a crying, and begged them to conduct her back to Germany, for that ſhe never could endure the operation; and it was with ſome difficulty they could appeaſe her. Philip IV. is ſaid never in his life to have laughed heartily but at the recital of this ſtory.

Having rejected polygamy, and matched one man with one woman, let us now conſider what duration we ſhall aſſign to their union, and whether we ſhall admit of thoſe voluntary divorces which were cuſtomary among the Greeks and Romans. Thoſe who would defend this practice may employ the following reaſons.

How often does diſguſt and averſion ariſe after marriage from the moſt trivial accidents, or from an incompatibility of humor; where time, inſtead, of curing the wounds proceeding from mutual injuries, feſters them every day the more by new quarrels and reproaches? Let us ſeparate hearts, which were not made to aſſociate together. Each of them may, perhaps, find another for which it is better fitted. At leaſt, nothing can be more cruel can to preſerve by violence an union, which at firſt was made by mutual love, and is now in effect diſſolved by mutual hatred.

But the liberty of divorces is not only a cure to

hatred and domeſtic quarrels; it is alſo an admirable preſervative againſt them, and the only ſecret for keeping alive that love which firſt united the married couple. The heart of man delights in liberty; the very image of conſtraint is grievous to it: When you would confine it by violence to what would otherwiſe have been its choice, the inclination immediately changes, and deſire is turned into averſion. If the public intereſt will not allow us to enjoy in polygamy that *variety* which is ſo agreeable in love; at leaſt deprive us not of that liberty which is ſo eſſentially requiſite. In vain you tell me, that I had my choice of the perſon with whom I would conjoin myſelf. I had my choice, it is true, of my priſon; but this is but a ſmall comfort, ſince it muſt ſtill be a priſon.

Such are the arguments which may be urged in favor of divorces: But there ſeem to be theſe three unanſwerable objections againſt them. *Firſt*, what muſt become of the children upon the ſeparation of the parents? Muſt they be committed to the care of a ſtep-mother; and inſtead of the fond attention and concern of a parent, feel all the indifference or hatred of a ſtranger or an enemy? Theſe inconveniences are ſufficiently felt, where nature has made the divorce by the doom inevitable to all mortals: And ſhall we ſeek to multiply thoſe inconveniences, by multiplying divorces, and putting it in the power of parents, upon every caprice, to render their poſterity miſerable.

Secondly, if it be true, on the one hand, that the heart of man naturally delights in liberty, and hates every thing to which it is confined; it is alſo true, on the other, that the heart of man naturally ſubmits to neceſſity, and ſoon loſes an inclination when there appears an abſolute impoſſibility of gratifying it. Theſe principles of human nature, you'll ſay, are contradictory: But what is man but a heap of contradictions! Though it is remarkable, that where principles are, after this manner, contrary in their operation, they do not always deſtroy each other; but the one or the other may predominate on any particular occaſion, according as circumſtances are more or leſs favorable to it. For inſtance, love is a reſtleſs and impatient paſſion, full of caprices and variations; ariſing in a moment from a feature, from an air, from nothing, and ſuddenly extinguiſhing after the ſame manner. Such a paſſion requires liberty above all things; and therefore Eloiſa had reaſon, when, in order to preſerve this paſſion, ſhe refuſed to marry her beloved Abelard.

How oft, when preſt to marriage, have I ſaid,
Curſe on all laws but thoſe which love has made:
Love, free as air, at ſight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

But *friendſhip* is a calm and ſedate affection, conducted by reaſon and cemented by habit; ſpringing from long acquaintance and mutual obligations; without jealouſies or fears, and without thoſe feveriſh fits of heat and cold which cauſe ſuch an

agreeable torment in the amorous paſſion. So ſober an affection, therefore, as friendſhip, rather thrives under conſtraint, at never riſes to ſuch a height as when any ſtrong intereſt or neceſſity binds two perſons together, and gives them ſome common object or purſuit. We need not, therefore, be afraid of drawing the marriage-knot, which chiefly ſubſiſts by friendſhip, the cloſeſt poſſible. The amity between the perſons, where it is ſolid and ſincere, will rather gain by it; and where it is wavering and uncertain, this is the beſt expedient for fixing it. How many frivolous quarrels and diſguſts are there, which people of common prudence endeavour to forget, when they lie under a neceſſity of paſſing their lives together; but which would ſoon be inflamed into the moſt deadly hatred, were they purſued to the utmoſt, under the proſpect of an eaſy ſeparation?

In the *third* place, we muſt conſider, that nothing is more dangerous than to unite two perſons ſo cloſely in all their intereſts and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total. The leaſt poſſibility of a ſeparate intereſt muſt be the ſource of endleſs quarrels and ſuſpicions. The wife not ſecure of her eſtabliſhment, will ſtill be driving ſome ſeparate end or project; and the huſband's ſelfiſhneſs, being accompanied with more power, may be ſtill more dangerous.

Should theſe reaſons againſt voluntary divorces be deemed inſufficient, I hope nobody will pretend to refuſe the teſtimony of experience. At

the time when divorces were moſt frequent among the Romans, marriages were moſt rare; and Auguſtus was obliged, by penal laws, to force men of faſhion into the married ſtate: A circumſtance which is ſcarcely to be found in any other age or nation. The more ancient laws of Rome, which prohibited divorces, are extremely praiſed by Dionyſius Halycarnaſſæus [a]. Wonderful was the harmony, ſays the hiſtorian, which this inſeparable union of intereſts produced between married perſons; while each of them conſidered the inevitable neceſſity by which they were linked together, and abandoned all proſpect of any other choice or eſtabliſhment.

The excluſion of polygamy and divorces ſufficiently recommends our preſent European practice with regard to marriage.

[a] Lib. ii.

ESSAY XX.

OF SIMPLICITY AND REFINEMENT IN WRITING.

FINE writing, according to Mr Addiſon, conſiſts of ſentiments which are natural, without being obvious. There cannot be a juſter and more conciſe definition of fine writing.

Sentiments, which are merely natural, affect not the mind with any pleaſure, and ſeem not worthy of our attention. The pleaſantries of a waterman, the obſervations of a peaſant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney-coachman, all of theſe are natural and diſagreeable. What an inſipid comedy ſhould we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can pleaſe perſons of taſte, but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments *la belle nature;* or if we copy low life, the ſtrokes muſt be ſtrong and remarkable, and muſt convey a lively image to the mind. The abſurd *naïveté* of *Sancho Pança* is repreſented in ſuch inimitable colors by Cervantes, that it entertains as much as the picture of the moſt magnanimous hero or ſofteſt lover.

The caſe is the ſame with orators, philoſophers, critics, or any author who ſpeaks in his own perſon, without introducing other ſpeakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his obſervations uncommon, his ſenſe ſtrong and maſculine,

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he will in vain boaſt his nature and ſimplicity. He may be correct, but he never will be agreeable. Is it the unhappineſs of ſuch authors, that they are never blamed or cenſured. The good fortune of a book, and that of a man, are not the ſame. The ſecret deceiving path of life, which Horace talks of, *fallantis ſemita vitæ*, may be the happieſt lot of the one, but is the greateſt misfortune which the other can poſſibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions which are merely ſurpriſing, without being natural, can never give any laſting entertainment to the mind. To draw chimeras, is not, properly ſpeaking, to copy or imitate. The juſtneſs of repreſentation is loſt, and the mind is diſpleaſed to find a picture which bears no reſemblance to any original. Nor are ſuch exceſſive refinements more agreeable in the epiſtolary or philoſophic ſtyle than, in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expreſſions, ſtrong flaſhes of wit, pointed ſimilies, and epigrammatic turns, eſpecially when they recur too frequently, are a diſfigurement rather than any embelliſhment of diſcourſe. As the eye, in ſurveying a Gothic building, is diſtracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loſes the whole by its minute attention to the parts; ſo the mind, in peruſing a work overſtocked with wit, is fatigued and diſguſted with the conſtant endeavour to ſhine and ſurpriſe. This is the caſe where a writer over-abounds in wit, even

though that wit in itſelf ſhould be juſt and agreeable. But it commonly happens to ſuch writers, that they ſeek for their favorite ornaments, even where the ſubject does not afford them; and by that means have twenty inſipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no ſubject in critical learning more copious, than this of the juſt mixture of ſimplicity and refinement in writing; and therefore, not to wander in too large a field, I ſhall confine myſelf to a few general obſervations on that head.

Firſt, I obſerve, *that though exceſſes of both kinds are to be avoided, and though a proper medium ought to be ſtudied in all productions; yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a conſiderable latitude.* Conſider the wide diſtance, in this reſpect, between Mr. Pope and Lucretius. Theſe ſeem to lie in the two greateſt extremes of refinement and ſimplicity, in which a poet can indulge himſelf, without being guilty of any blameable exceſs. All this interval may be filled with poets who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar ſtyle and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement ſomewhat farther than Mr. Pope (if poets of ſo different a kind can be compared together), and Sophocles and Terence, who are more ſimple than Lucretius, ſeem to have gone out of that medium in which the moſt perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of ſome exceſs in theſe oppoſite characters. Of all the great poets, Virgil and Racine, in my opinion,

lie neareſt the centre, and are the fartheſt removed from both the extremities.

My *ſecond* obſervation on this head is, *That it is very difficult, if not impoſſible, to explain by words, where the juſt medium lies between the exceſſes of ſimplicity and refinement, or to give any rule by which we can know preciſely the bounds between the fault and the beauty.* A critic may not only diſcourſe very judiciouſly on this head, without inſtructing his readers, but even without underſtanding the matter perfectly himſelf. There is not a finer piece of criticiſm than the *diſſertation on paſtorals* by Fontenelle; in which, by a number of reflections and philoſophical reaſonings, he endeavours to fix the juſt medium which is ſuitable to that ſpecies of writing. But let any one read the paſtorals of that author, and he will be convinced, that this judicious critic, notwithſtanding his fine reaſonings, had a falſe taſte, and fixed the point of perfection much nearer the extreme of refinement than paſtoral poetry will admit of. The ſentiments of his ſhepherds are better ſuited to the toilettes of Paris than to the foreſts of Arcadia. But this it is impoſſible to diſcover from his critical reaſonings. He blames all exceſſive painting and ornament as much as Virgil could have done, had that great poet writ a diſſertation on this ſpecies of poetry. However, different the taſtes of men, their general diſcourſe on theſe ſubjects is commonly the ſame. No criticiſm can be inſtructive which deſcends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illuſtrations.

It is allowed on all hands, that beauty, as well as virtue, always lies in a medium; but where this medium is placed, is a great queſtion, and can never be ſufficiently explained by general reaſonings.

I ſhall deliver it as a *third* obſervation on this ſubject, *That we ought to be more on our guard againſt the exceſs of refinement than that of ſimplicity; and that becauſe the former exceſs is both leſs* beautiful *and more* dangerous *than the latter.*

It is a certain rule, that wit and paſſion are entirely incompatible. When the affections are moved, there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, it is impoſſible that all its faculties can operate at once; and the more any one predominates, the leſs room is there for the others to exert their vigor. For this reaſon a greater degree of ſimplicity is required in all compoſitions, where men, and actions, and paſſions are painted, than in ſuch as conſiſt of reflections and obſervations. And as the former ſpecies of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may ſafely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of ſimplicity above that of refinement.

We may alſo obſerve, that thoſe compoſitions which we read the oftneſt, and which every man of taſte has got by heart, have the recommendation of ſimplicity, and have nothing ſurpriſing in the thought when diveſted of that elegance of expreſſion, and harmony of numbers, with which it is clothed. If the merit of the compoſition lie

in a point of wit, it may ſtrike at firſt; but the mind anticipates the thought in the ſecond peruſal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the firſt line recalls the whole; and I have no pleaſure in repeating to myſelf what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus, has its merit; and I am never tired with the peruſal of him. It is ſufficient to run over Cowley once: But Parnel, after the fiftieth reading, is as freſh as at the firſt. Beſides, it is with books as with women, where a certain plainneſs of manner and of dreſs is more engaging, than that glare of paint and airs and apparel, which may dazzle the eye, but reaches not the affections. Terence is a modeſt and baſhful beauty, to whom we grant every thing, becauſe he aſſumes nothing, and whoſe purity and nature make a durable, though not a violent impreſſion on us.

But refinement, as it is the leſs *beautiful*, ſo is it the more *dangerous* extreme, and what we are the apteſt to fall into. Simplicity paſſes for dulneſs, when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is ſomething ſurpriſing in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily ſtruck with it, and falſely imagine it to be the moſt difficult, as well as moſt excellent way of writing. Seneca abounds with agreeable faults, ſays Quintilian, *abundat dulcibus vitiis;* and for that reaſon is the more dangerous, and the more apt to pervert the taſte of the young and inconſiderate.

I ſhall add, that the exceſs of refinement is now more to be guarded againſt than ever; becauſe it is the extreme which men are the moſt apt to fall into, after learning has made ſome progreſs, and after eminent writers have appeared in every ſpecies of compoſition. The endeavour to pleaſe by novelty leads men wide of ſimplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the Aſiatic eloquence degenerated ſo much from the Attic: It was thus the age of Claudius and Nero became ſo much inferior to that of Auguſtus in taſte and genius, and perhaps there are, at preſent, ſome ſymptoms of a like degeneracy of taſte in France as well as in England.

ESSAY XXI.

OF NATIONAL CHARACTERS.

THE vulgar are apt to carry all *national characters* to extremes; and having once eſtabliſhed it as a principle, that any people are knaviſh, or cowardly, or ignorant, they will admit of no exception, but comprehend every individual under the ſame cenſure. Men of ſenſe condemn theſe undiſtinguiſhing judgments; though, at the ſame time, they allow, that each nation has a peculiar ſet of manners, and that ſome particular

qualities are more frequently to be met with among one people than among their neighbours. The common people in Switzerland have probably more honeſty than thoſe of the ſame rank in Ireland; and every prudent man will, from that circumſtance alone, make a difference in the truſt which he repoſes in each. We have reaſon to expect greater wit and gaiety in a Frenchman than in a Spaniard; though Cervantes was born in Spain. An Engliſhman will naturally be ſuppoſed to have more knowledge than a Dane; though Tycho Brahe was a native of Denmark.

Different reaſons are aſſigned for theſe *national characters*; while ſome account for them from *moral*, others from *phyſical* cauſes. By *moral* cauſes, I mean all circumſtances which are fitted to work on the mind as motives or reaſons, and which render a peculiar ſet of manners habitual to us. Of this kind are, the nature of the government, the revolutions of public affairs, the plenty or penury in which the people live, the ſituation of the nation with regard to its neighbours, and ſuch like circumſtances. By *phyſical* cauſes, I mean thoſe qualities of the air and climate which are ſuppoſed to work inſenſibly on the temper, by altering the tone and habit of the body, and giving a particular complexion, which, though reflection and reaſon may ſometimes overcome it, will yet prevail among the generality of mankind, and have an influence on their manners.

That the character of a nation will much depend on *moral* cauſes, muſt be evident to the moſt ſuperficial obſerver; ſince a nation is nothing but a collection of individuals, and the manners of individuals are frequently determined by theſe cauſes. As poverty and hard labor debaſe the minds of the common people, and render them unfit for any ſcience and ingenious profeſſion; ſo where any government becomes very oppreſſive to all its ſubjects, it muſt have a proportional effect on their temper and genius, and muſt baniſh all the liberal arts from among them.

The ſame principle of moral cauſes fixes the character of different profeſſions, and alters even that diſpoſition which the particular members receive from the hand of nature. A *ſoldier* and a *prieſt* are different characters, in all nations, and all ages; and this difference is founded on circumſtances, whoſe operation is eternal and unalterable.

The uncertainty of their life makes ſoldiers laviſh and generous, as well as brave: Their idleneſs, together with the large ſocieties, which they form in camps or garriſons, inclines them to pleaſure and gallantry: By their frequent change of company, they acquire good breeding and an oppenneſs of behaviour: Being employed only againſt a public and an open enemy, they become candid, honeſt, and undeſigning: And as they uſe more the labor of

the body than that of the mind, they are commonly thoughtleſs and ignorant [1].

It is a trite, but not altogether a falſe maxim, that *prieſts of all religions are the ſame;* and though the character of the profeſſion will not, in every inſtance, prevail over the perſonal character, yet is it ſure always to predominate with the greater number. For as chymiſts obſerve, that ſpirits, when raiſed to a certain height, are all the ſame, from whatever materials they be extracted, ſo theſe men, being elevated above humanity, acquire a uniform character, which is entirely their own, and which, in my opinion, is, generally ſpeaking, not the moſt amiable that is to be met with in human ſociety. It is in moſt points oppoſite to that of a ſoldier; as is the way of life from which it is derived [2].

As to *phyſical cauſes*, I am inclined to doubt altogether of their operation in this particular; nor do I think that men owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate. I confeſs, that the contrary opinion may juſtly, at firſt ſight, ſeem probable; ſince we find, that theſe circumſtances have an influence over every other animal, and that even thoſe creatures, which are fitted to live in all climates, ſuch as dogs horſes, &c. do not attain the ſame perfection in all. The courage of bull-dogs and game-cocks ſeem peculiar to England. Flanders is remarkable for large and heavy horſes;

[1] See NOTE [H].

[2] See NOTE [I].

Spain for horſes light and of good mettle. And any breed of theſe creatures, tranſplanted from one country to another, will ſoon loſe the qualities which they derived from their native climate. It may be aſked, why not the ſame with men [3]?

There are few queſtions more curious than this, which will oftener occur in our inquiries concerning human affairs; and therefore it may be proper to give it a full examination.

The human mind is of a very imitative nature; nor is it poſſible for any ſet of men to converſe often together, without acquiring a ſimilitude of manners, and communicating to each other their vices as well as virtues. The propenſity to company and ſociety is ſtrong in all rational creatures; and the ſame diſpoſition which gives us this propenſity, makes us enter deeply into each others ſentiments, and cauſes like paſſions and inclinations to run, as it were, by contagion, through the whole club or knot of companions. Where a number of men are united into one political body, the occaſions of their intercourſe muſt be ſo frequent, for defence, commerce, and government, that, together with the ſame ſpeech or language, they muſt acquire a reſemblance in their manners; and have a common or national character, as well as a perſonal one, peculiar to each individual. Now though nature produces all kinds of temper and underſtanding in great abundance, it does not follow, that ſhe always produces them in like proportions, and that in every ſociety the ingredients

[3] See NOTE [K].

of induſtry and indolence, valor and cowardice, humanity and brutality, wiſdom and folly, will be mixed after the ſame manner. In the infancy of ſociety, if any of theſe diſpoſitions be found in greater abundance than the reſt, it will naturally prevail in the compoſition, and give a tincture to the national character. Or ſhould it be aſſerted, that no ſpecies of temper can reaſonably be preſumed to predominate, even in thoſe contracted ſocieties, and that the ſame proportions will always be preſerved in the mixture; yet ſurely the perſons in credit and authority, being ſtill a more contracted body, cannot always be preſumed to be of the ſame character; and their influence on the manners of the people, muſt, at all times, be very conſiderable. If, on the firſt eſtabliſhment of a republic, a Brutus ſhould be placed in authority, and be tranſported with ſuch enthuſiaſm for liberty and public good, as to overlook all the ties of nature, as well as private intereſt, ſuch an illuſtrious example will naturally have an effect on the whole ſociety, and kindle the ſame paſſion in every boſom. Whatever it be that forms the manners of one generation, the next muſt imbibe a deeper tincture of the ſame die; men being more ſuſceptible of all impreſſions during infancy, and retaining theſe impreſſions as long as they remain in the world. I aſſert, then, that all national characters, where they depend not on fixed *moral* cauſes, proceed from ſuch accidents as theſe, and that phyſical cauſes have no diſcernible operation on the human mind. It is a maxim in all philoſophy,

that cauſes, which do not appear, are to be conſidered as not exiſting.

If we run over the globe, or revolve the annals of hiſtory, we ſhall diſcover every where ſigns of a ſympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air or climate.

Firſt. We may obſerve, that, where a very extenſive government has been eſtabliſhed for many centuries, it ſpreads a national character over the whole empire, and communicates to every part a ſimilarity of manners. Thus the Chineſe have the greateſt uniformity of character imaginable: Though the air and climate, in different parts of thoſe vaſt dominions, admit of very conſiderable variations.

Secondly. In ſmall governments, which are contiguous, the people have notwithſtanding a different character, and are often as diſtinguiſhable in their manners as the moſt diſtant nations. Athens and Thebes were but a ſhort day's journey from each other; though the Athenians were as remarkable for ingenuity, politeneſs, and gaiety, as the Thebans for dulneſs, ruſticity, and a phlegmatic temper. Plutarch, diſcourſing of the effects of air on the minds of men, obſerves, that the inhabitants of the Piræum poſſeſſed very different tempers from thoſe of the higher town in Athens, which was diſtant about four miles from the former: But I believe no one attributes the difference of manners in Wapping and St. James's to a difference of air or climate.

Thirdly. The ſame national character commonly follows the authority of government to a preciſe

boundary; and upon croſſing a river, or paſſing a mountain, one finds a new ſet of manners, with a new government. The Languedocians and Gaſcons are the gayeſt people in France; but whenever you paſs the Pyrenees, you are among Spaniards. Is it conceivable, that the qualities of the air ſhould change exactly with the limits of an empire, which depend ſo much on the accidents of battles, negociations, and mar riages?

Fourthly. Where any ſet of men, ſcattered over diſtant nations, maintain a cloſe ſociety or communication together, they acquire a ſimilitude of manners, and have but little in common with the nations amongſt whom they live. Thus the Jews in Europe, and the Arminians in the Eaſt, have a peculiar character; and the former are as much noted for fraud as the latter for probity [*]. The *Jeſuits*, in all *Roman-catholic* countries, are alſo obſerved to have a character peculiar to themſelves.

Fifthly. Where any accident, as a difference in language or religion, keeps two nations, inhabiting the ſame country, from mixing with each other, they will preſerve, during ſeveral centuries, a diſtinct and even oppoſite ſet of manners. The integrity, gravity, and bravery of the Turks, form an exact contraſt to the deceit, levity, and cowardice of the modern Greeks.

Sixthly. The ſame ſet of manners will follow a nation, and adhere to them over the whole globe,

[*] See NOTE [L].

as well as the ſame laws and language. The Spaniſh, Engliſh, French, and Dutch colonies, are all diſtinguiſhed even between the tropics.

Seventhly. The manners of a people change very conſiderably from one age to another; either by great alterations in their government, by the mixtures of new people, or by that inconſtancy to which all human affairs are ſubject. The ingenuity, induſtry, and activity of the ancient Greeks, have nothing in common with the ſtupidity and indolence of the preſent inhabitants of thoſe regions. Candor, bravery, and love of liberty formed the character of the ancient Romans; as ſubtilty, cowardice, and a ſlaviſh diſpoſition do that of the modern. The old Spaniards were reſtleſs, turbulent, and ſo addicted to war, that many of them killed themſelves when deprived of their arms by the Romans [5]. One would find an equal difficulty at preſent (at leaſt one would have found it fifty years ago), to rouſe up the modern Spaniards to arms. The Batavians were all ſoldiers of fortune, and hired themſelves into the Roman armies. Their poſterity make uſe of foreigners for the ſame purpoſe that the Romans did of their anceſtors. Though ſome few ſtrokes of the French character be the ſame with that which Cæſar has aſcribed to the Gauls; yet what compariſon between the civility, humanity, and knowledge of the modern inhabitants of that country, and the ignorance, barbarity, and groſſneſs of the ancient? Not to inſiſt

[5] Tit. Livii lib. xxxiv. chap. 17.

upon the great difference between the preſent poſſeſſors of Britain, and thoſe before the Roman conqueſt; we may obſerve that our anceſtors, a few centuries ago, were ſunk into the moſt abject ſuperſtition: laſt century they were inflamed with the moſt furious enthuſiaſm, and are now ſettled into the moſt cool indifference, with regard to religious matters, that is to be found in any nation of the world.

Eighthly. Where ſeveral neighbouring nations have a very cloſe communication together by policy, commerce, or travelling, they acquire a ſimilitude of manners proportioned to the communication. Thus all the Franks appear to have a uniform character to the eaſtern nations. The differences among them are like the peculiar accents of different provinces, which are not diſtinguiſhable, except by an ear accuſtomed to them, and which commonly eſcape a foreigner.

Ninthly. We may often remark a wonderful mixture of manners and characters in the ſame nation, ſpeaking the ſame language, and ſubject to the ſame government: And in this particular the Engliſh are the moſt remarkable of any people that perhaps ever were in the world. Nor is this to be aſcribed to the mutability and uncertainty of their climate, or to any other *phyſical* cauſes; ſince all theſe cauſes take place in the neighbouring country of Scotland, without having the ſame effect. Where the government of a nation is altogether republican, it is apt to beget a peculiar

ſet of manners. Where it is altogether monarchial, it is more apt to have the ſame effect; the imitation of ſuperiors ſpreading the national manners faſter among the people. If the governing part of a ſtate conſiſts altogether of merchants, as in Holland, their uniform way of life will fix their character. If it conſiſts chiefly of nobles and landed gentry, like Germany, France, and Spain, the effect follows. The genius of a particular ſect or religion is alſo apt to mould the manners of a people. But the Engliſh government is a mixture of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy. The people in authority are compoſed of gentry and merchants. All ſects of religion are to be found among them. And the great liberty and independency which every man enjoys, allows him to diſplay the manners peculiar to him. Hence the Engliſh, of any people in the univerſe, have the leaſt of a national character; unleſs this very ſingularity may paſs for ſuch.

If the characters of men depended on the air and climate, the degrees of heat and cold ſhould naturally be expected to have a mighty influence; ſince nothing has a greater effect on all plants and irrational animals. And indeed there is ſome reaſon to think, that all the nations which live beyond the polar circles, or between the tropics, are inferior to the reſt of the ſpecies, and are incapable of all the higher attainments of the human mind. The poverty and miſery of the northern inhabitants of the globe, and the indolence of

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the ſouthern, from their few neceſſities, may, perhaps, account for this remarkable difference, without having recourſe to *phyſical* cauſes. This however is certain, that the characters of nations are very promiſcuous in the temperate climates, and that almoſt all the general obſervations, which have been formed of the more ſouthern or more northern people in theſe climates, are found to be uncertain and fallacious[*].

Shall we ſay, that the neighbourhood of the ſun inflames the imagination of men, and gives it a peculiar ſpirit and vivacity? The French, Greeks, Egyptians, and Perſians are remarkable for gaiety. The Spaniards, Turks, and Chineſe are noted for gravity, and a ſerious deportment without any ſuch difference of climate as to produce this difference of temper.

The Greeks and Romans, who called all other nations barbarians, confined genius and a fine underſtanding to the more ſouthern climates, and pronounced the northern nations incapable of all knowledge and civility; but our iſland has produced as great men, either for action or learning, as Greece or Italy has to boaſt of.

It is pretended, that the ſentiments of men become more delicate as the country approaches nearer to the ſun; and that the taſte of beauty and elegance receives porportional improvements in every latitude; as we may particularly obſerve

[*] See NOTE [M].

of the languages, of which the more ſouthern are ſmooth and melodious, the northern harſh and untunable. But this obſervation holds not univerſally. The Arabic is uncouth and diſagreeable: The Muſcovite ſoft and muſical. Energy, ſtrength, and harſhneſs form the character of the Latin tongue: The Italian is the moſt liquid, ſmooth, and effeminate language that can poſſibly be imagined. Every language will depend ſomewhat on the manners of the people; but much more on that original ſtock of words and ſounds which they received from their anceſtors, and which remain unchangeable, even while their manners admit of the greateſt alterations. Who can doubt, but the Engliſh are at preſent a more polite and knowing people than the Greeks were for ſeveral ages after the ſiege of Troy? Yet is there no compariſon between the language of Milton and that of Homer. Nay, the greater are the alterations and improvements, which happen in the manners of a people, the leſs can be expected in their language. A few eminent and refined geniuſes will communicate their taſte and knowledge to a whole people, and produce the greateſt improvements; but they fix the tongue by their writings, and prevent, in ſome degree, its farther changes.

Lord Bacon has obſerved, that the inhabitants of the ſouth are, in general, more ingenious than thoſe of the north; but that, where the native of a cold climate has genius, he riſes to a higher

pitch than can be reached by the ſouthern wits. This obſervation a late [7] writer confirms, by comparing the ſouthern wits to cucumbers, which are commonly all good in their kind; but at beſt are an inſipid fruit: While the northern geniuſes are like melons, of which not one in fifty is good; but when it is ſo, it has an exquiſite reliſh. I believe this remark may be allowed juſt, when confined to the European nations, and to the preſent age, or rather to the preceding one; but I think it may be accounted for from moral cauſes. All the ſciences and liberal arts have been imported to us from the ſouth; and it is eaſy to imagine, that in the firſt order of application, when excited by emulation and by glory, the few, who were addicted to them, would carry them to the greateſt height, and ſtretch every nerve, and every faculty, to reach the pinnacle of perfection. Such illuſtrious examples ſpread knowledge every where, and begot an univerſal eſteem for the ſciences: After which, it is no wonder that induſtry relaxes; while men meet not with ſuitable encouragement, nor arrive at ſuch diſtinction by their attainments. The univerſal diffuſion of learning among a people, and the entire baniſhment of groſs ignorance and ruſticity, is, therefore, ſeldom attended with any remarkable perfection in particular perſons. It ſeems to be taken for granted in the dialogue

[7] Dr. Berkeley: Minute Philoſopher.

de Oratoribus, that knowledge was much more common in Veſpaſian's age than in that of Cicero and Auguſtus. Quintilian alſo complains of the profanation of learning, by its becoming too common. "Formerly," ſays Juvenal, "ſcience "was confined to Greece and Italy. Now the "whole world emulates Athens and Rome. "Eloquent Gaul has taught Britain, knowing in "the laws. Even Thule entertains thoughts of "hiring rhetoricians for its inſtruction [a]." This ſtate of learning is remarkable; becauſe Juvenal is himſelf the laſt of the Roman writers that poſſeſſed any degree of genius. Thoſe who ſucceeded are valued for nothing but the matters of fact, of which they give us information. I hope the late converſion of Muſcovy to the ſtudy of the ſciences will not prove a like prognoſtic to the preſent period of learning.

Cardinal Bentivoglio gives the preference to the northern nations above the ſouthern with regard to candor and ſincerity; and mentions, on the one hand, the Spaniards and Italians, and on the other, the Flemings and Germans. But I am apt to think, that this has happened by accident. The ancient Romans ſeem to have been a candid ſincere people, as are the modern Turks.

[a] "Sed Cantaber unde
Stoicus, antiqui præſertim ætate Metelli?
Nunc totus Graias noſtraſque habet orbis Athenas;
Gallia cauſidicos docuit facunda Britannos,
De conducendo loquitur jam rhetore Thule."
Sat. 15.

But if we muſt needs ſuppoſe, that this event has ariſen from fixed cauſes, we may only conclude from it, that all extremes are apt to concur, and are commonly attended with the ſame conſequences. Treachery is the uſual concomitant of ignorance and barbariſm; and if civilized nations ever embrace ſubtle and crooked politics, it is from an exceſs of refinement, which makes them diſdain the plain direct path to power and glory.

Moſt conqueſts have gone from north to ſouth; and it has hence been inferred, that the northern nations poſſeſs a ſuperior degree of courage and ferocity. But it would have been juſter to have ſaid, that moſt conqueſts are made by poverty and want upon plenty and riches. The Saracens, leaving the deſerts of Arabia, carried their conqueſts northwards upon all the fertile provinces of the Roman empire; and met the Turks half way, who were coming ſouthwards from the deſerts of Tartary.

An eminent writer [9] has remarked, that all courageous animals are alſo carnivorous, and that greater courage is to be expected in a people, ſuch as the Engliſh, whoſe food is ſtrong and hearty, than in the half-ſtarved commonalty of other countries. But the Swedes, notwithſtanding their diſadvantages in this particular, are not inferior, in martial courage, to any nation that ever was in the world.

[9] Sir William Temple's Account of the Netherlands.

In general, we may obſerve, that courage, of all national qualities, is the moſt precarious; becauſe it is exerted only at intervals, and by a few in every nation; whereas induſtry, knowledge, civility, may be of conſtant and univerſal uſe, and, for ſeveral ages, may become habitual to the whole people. If courage be preſerved, it muſt be by diſcipline, example, and opinion. The tenth legion of Cæſar, and the regiment of Picardy in France, were formed promiſcuouſly from among the citizens: but having once entertained a notion, that they were the beſt troops in the ſervice, this very opinion really made them ſuch.

As a proof how much courage depends on opinion, we may obſerve, that, of the two chief tribes of the Greeks, the Dorians and Ionians, the former were always eſteemed, and always appeared, more brave and manly than the latter; though the colonies of both the tribes were interſperſed and intermingled throughout all the extent of Greece, the Leſſer Aſia, Sicily, Italy, and the iſlands of the Ægean ſea. The Athenians were the only Ionians that ever had any reputation for valor or military achievements; though even theſe were deemed inferior to the Lacedemonians, the braveſt of the Dorians.

The only obſervation, with regard to the difference of men in different climates, on which we can reſt any weight, is the vulgar one, that people in the northern regions have a greater inclination to

ſtrong liquors, and thoſe in the ſouthern to love and women. One can aſſign a very probable *phyſical* cauſe for this difference. Wine and diſtilled waters warm the frozen blood in the colder climates, and fortify men againſt the injuries of the weather: As the genial heat of the ſun, in the countries expoſed to his beams, inflames the blood, and exalts the paſſion between the ſexes.

Perhaps, too, the matter may be accounted for by *moral* cauſes. All ſtrong liquors are rarer in the north, and conſequently are more coveted. Diodorus Siculus [10] tells us, that the Gauls in his time were great drunkards, and much addicted to wine; chiefly, I ſuppoſe, from its rarity and novelty. On the other hand, the heat in the ſouthern climates, obliging men and women to go half naked, thereby renders their frequent commerce more dangerous, and inflames their mutual paſſion. This makes parents and huſbands more jealous and reſerved: which ſtill farther inflames the paſſion. Not to mention, that, as women ripen ſooner in the ſouthern regions, it is neceſſary to obſerve greater jealouſy and care in their education; it being evident, that a girl of twelve cannot poſſeſs equal

[10] *Lib.* v. The ſame author aſcribes taciturnity to that people; a new proof that national characters may alter very much. Taciturnity, as a national character, implies unſociableneſs. Ariſtotle, in his politics, book ii. cap. 2. ſays, that the Gauls are the only warlike nation who are negligent of women.

diſcretion to govern this paſſion, with one who feels not its violence till ſhe be ſeventeen or eighteen. Nothing ſo much encourages the paſſion of love as eaſe and leiſure, or is more deſtructive to it than induſtry and hard labor; and as the neceſſities of men are evidently fewer in the warm climates than in the cold ones, this circumſtance alone may make a conſiderable difference between them.

But perhaps the fact is doubtful, that nature has, either from moral and phyſical cauſes, diſtributed theſe reſpective inclinations to the different climates. The ancient Greeks, though born in a warm climate, ſeem to have been much addicted to the bottle; nor were their parties of pleaſure any thing but matches of drinking among men, who paſſed their time altogether apart from the fair. Yet when Alexander led the Greeks into Perſia, a ſtill more ſouthern climate, they multiplied their debauches of this kind, in imitation of the Perſian manners [11]. So honorable was the character of a drunkard among the Perſians, that Cyrus the younger, ſoliciting the ſober Lacedemonians for ſuccour againſt his brother Artaxerxes, claims it chiefly on account of his ſuperior endowments, as more valorous, more bountiful, and a better drinker [12]. Darius Hiſtaſpes made it be inſcribed

[11] BABYLONII *maximè in vinum, & quæ ebrietatem ſequuntur, effuſi ſunt.* QUINT. CUR. lib. v. cap. 1.

[12] PLUT. SYMP. lib. 1. quæſt. 4.

on his tomb-ſtone, among his other virtues and princely qualities, that no one could bear a greater quantity of liquor. You may obtain any thing of the Negroes by offering them ſtrong drink; and may eaſily prevail with them to ſell, not only their children, but their wives and miſtreſſes, for a caſk of brandy. In France and Italy few drink pure wine, except in the greateſt heats of ſummer; and, indeed, it is then almoſt as neceſſary, in order to recruit the ſpirits, evaporated by heat, at it is in Sweden, during the winter, in order to warm the bodies congealed by the rigor of the ſeaſon.

If jealouſy be regarded as a proof of an amorous diſpoſition, no people were more jealous than the Muſcovites, before their communication with Europe had ſomewhat altered their manners in this particular.

But ſuppoſing the fact true, that nature, by phyſical principles, has regularly diſtributed theſe two paſſions, the one to the northern, the other to the ſouthern regions; we can only infer, that the climate may affect the groſſer and more bodily organs of our frame; not that it can work upon thoſe finer organs, on which the operations of the mind and underſtanding depend. And this is agreeable to the analogy of nature. The races of animals never degenerate when carefully tended; and horſes, in particular, always ſhow their blood in their ſhape, ſpirit, and ſwiftneſs: But a coxcomb may beget a

philoſopher; as a man of virtue may leave a worthleſs progeny.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that though the paſſion for liquor be more brutal and debaſing than love, which, when properly managed, is the ſource of all politeneſs and refinement; yet this gives not ſo great an advantage to the ſouthern climates, as we may be apt at firſt ſight to imagine. When love goes beyond a certain pitch; it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourſe between the ſexes, on which the politeneſs of a nation will commonly much depend. And if we would ſubtilize and refine upon this point, we might obſerve, that the people, in very temperate climates, are the moſt likely to attain all ſorts of improvement; their blood not being ſo inflamed as to render them jealous, and yet being warm enough to make them ſet a due value on the charms and endowments of the fair ſex.

ESSAY XXII.

OF TRAGEDY.

IT ſeems an unaccountable pleaſure, which the ſpectators of a well written tragedy receive from ſorrow, terror, anxiety, and other paſſions, that are in themſelves diſagreeable and uneaſy. The more they are touched and affected, the more are they delighted with the ſpectacle; and as ſoon as the uneaſy paſſions ceaſe to operate, the piece is at an end. One ſcene of full joy and contentment and ſecurity, is the utmoſt that any compoſition of this kind can bear; and it is ſure always to be the concluding one. If, in the texture of the piece, there be interwoven any ſcenes of ſatisfaction, they afford only faint gleams of pleaſure, which are thrown in by way of variety, and in order to plunge the actors into deeper diſtreſs, by means of that contraſt and diſappointment. The whole art of the poet is employed, in rouſing and ſupporting the compaſſion and indignation, the anxiety and reſentment, of his audience. They are pleaſed in proportion as they are afflicted; and never are ſo happy as when they employ tears, ſobs, and cries, to give vent to their ſorrow, and relieve their heart, ſwoln with the tendereſt ſympathy and compaſſion.

The few critics who have had ſome tincture of philoſophy, have remarked this ſingular phenomenon, and have endeavoured to account for it;

L'Abbé Dubos, in his reflections on poetry and painting, aſſerts, that nothing is in general ſo diſagreeable to the mind as the languid, liſtleſs ſtate of indolence, into which it falls upon the removal of all paſſion and occupation. To get rid of this painful ſituation, it ſeeks every amuſement and purſuit; buſineſs, gaming, ſhows, executions; whatever will rouſe the paſſions, and take its attention from itſelf. No matter what the paſſion is: Let it be diſagreeable, afflicting, melancholy, diſordered; it is ſtill better than that inſipid languor, which ariſes from perfect tranquillity and repoſe.

It is impoſſible not to admit this account, as being, at leaſt in part, ſatisfactory. You may obſerve, when there are ſeveral tables of gaming, that all the company run to thoſe where the deepeſt play is, even though they find not there the beſt players. The view, or, at leaſt, imagination of high paſſions, ariſing from great loſs or gain, affects the ſpectator by ſympathy, gives him ſome touches of the ſame paſſions, and ſerves him for a momentary entertainment. It makes the time paſs the eaſier with him, and is ſome relief to that oppreſſion under which men commonly labor, when left entirely to their own thoughts and meditations.

We find that common liars always magnify, in their narrations, all kinds of danger, pain, diſtreſs, ſickneſs, deaths, murders, and cruelties; as well as joy, beauty, mirth, and magnificence. It is an abſurd ſecret, which they have for pleaſing their

company, fixing their attention, and attaching them to ſuch marvellous relations, by the paſſions and emotions which they excite.

There is, however, a difficulty in applying to the preſent ſubject, in its full extent, this ſolution, however ingenious and ſatisfactory it may appear. It is certain, that the ſame object of diſtreſs, which pleaſes in a tragedy, were it really ſet before us, would give the moſt unfeigned uneaſineſs; though it be then the moſt effectual cure to languor and indolence. Monſieur Fontenelle ſeems to have been ſenſible of this difficulty; and accordingly attempts another ſolution of the phenomenon; at leaſt makes ſome addition to the theory above mentioned [z].

"Pleaſure and pain," ſays he "which are two "ſentiments ſo different in themſelves, differ not "ſo much in their cauſe. From the inſtances of "tickling, it appears, that the movement of plea-"ſure, puſhed a little too far, becomes pain; and "that the movement of pain, a little moderated, "becomes pleaſure. Hence it proceeds, that there "is ſuch a thing as a ſorrow, ſoft and agreeable: "It is a pain weakened and diminiſhed. The "heart likes naturally to be moved and affected. "Melancholy objects ſuit it, and even diſaſtrous "and ſorrowful, provided they are ſoftened by "ſome circumſtance. It is certain, that, on the "theatre, the repreſentation has almoſt the effect "of reality; yet it has not altogether that effect. "However we may be hurried away by the ſpecta-"cle; whatever dominion the ſenſes and imagination

[z] Réflexions ſur la Poétique, §. 36.

" may uſurp over the reaſon, there ſtill lurks at " the bottom a certain idea of falſhood in the " whole of what we ſee. This idea, though weak " and diſguiſed, ſuffices to diminiſh the pain " which we ſuffer from the misfortunes of thoſe " whom we love, and to reduce that affliction to " ſuch a pitch as converts it into a pleaſure. We " weep for the misfortunes of a hero to whom " we are attached. In the ſame inſtant we com- " fort ourſelves, by reflecting, that it is nothing " but a fiction: And it is preciſely that mixture of " ſentiments which compoſes an agreeable ſorrow, " and tears that delight us. But as that affliction, " which is cauſed by exterior and ſenſible objects, " is ſtronger than the conſolation which ariſes " from an internal reflection, they are the effects " and ſymptoms of ſorrow, that ought to predo- " minate in the compoſition."

This ſolution ſeems juſt and convincing; but perhaps it wants ſtill ſome new addition, in order to make it anſwer fully the phenomenon which we here examine. All the paſſions excited by eloquence are agreeable in the higheſt degree, as well as thoſe which are moved by painting and the theatre. The epilogues of Cicero are, on this account chiefly, the delight of every reader of taſte; and it is difficult to read ſome of them without the deepeſt ſympathy and ſorrow. His merit as an orator, no doubt, depends much on his ſucceſs in this particular. When he had raiſed tears in his judges and all his audience, they were then the moſt highly delighted, and expreſſed the

greateſt ſatisfaction with the pleader. The pathethic deſcription of the butchery, made by Verres of the Sicilian captains, is a maſter-piece of this kind: But I believe none will affirm, that the being preſent at a melancholy ſcene of that nature would afford any entertainment. Neither is the ſorrow here ſoftened by fiction: For the audience were convinced of the reality of every circumſtance. What is it then, which in this caſe raiſes a pleaſure from the boſom of uneaſineſs, ſo to ſpeak; and a pleaſure, which ſtill retains all the features and outward ſymptoms of diſtreſs and ſorrow?

I anſwer: This extraordinary effect proceeds from that very eloquence with which the melancholy ſcene is repreſented. The genius required to paint objects in a lively manner, the art employed in collecting all the pathetic circumſtances, the judgment diſplayed in diſpoſing them: the exerciſe, I ſay, of theſe noble talents, together with the force of expreſſion, and beauty of oratorial members, diffuſe the higheſt ſatisfaction on the audience, and excite the moſt delightful movements. By this means, the uneaſineſs of the melancholy paſſions is not only overpowered and effaced by ſomething ſtronger of an oppoſite kind: but the whole impulſe of thoſe paſſions is converted into pleaſure, and ſwells the delight which the eloquence raiſes in us. The ſame force of oratory employed on an unintereſting ſubject, would not pleaſe half ſo much, or rather would appear altogether ridiculous; and the mind, being left in abſolute calmneſs and indifference,

would reliſh none of thoſe beauties of imagination or expreſſion, which, if joined to paſſion, give it ſuch exquiſite entertainment. The impulſe or vehemence, ariſing from ſorrow, compaſſion, indignation, receives a new direction from the ſentiments of beauty. The latter, being the predominant emotion, ſeize the whole mind, and convert the former into themſelves, at leaſt tincture them ſo ſtrongly as totally to alter their nature. And the ſoul, being, at the ſame time, rouſed by paſſion, and charmed by eloquence, feels on the whole a ſtrong movement which is altogether delightful.

The ſame principle takes place in tragedy; with this addition, that tragedy is an imitation; and imitation is always of itſelf agreeable. The circumſtance ſerves ſtill farther to ſmooth the motions of paſſion, and convert the whole feeling into one uniform and ſtrong enjoyment. Objects of the greateſt terror and diſtreſs pleaſe in painting, and pleaſe more than the moſt beautiful objects, that appear calm and indifferent [2]. The affection, rouſing the mind, excites a large ſtock of ſpirit and vehemence; which is all transformed into pleaſure by the force of the prevailing movement. It is thus the fiction of tragedy ſoftens the paſſion, by an infuſion of a new feeling, not merely by weakening or diminiſhing the ſorrow. You may by degrees weaken a real ſorrow, till it totally diſappears; yet in none of its gradations will it ever give pleaſure; except,

[2] See NOTE [N].

perhaps,

perhaps, by accident, to a man ſunk under lethargic indolence, whom it rouſes from that languid ſtate.

To confirm this theory, it will be ſufficient to produce other inſtances, where the ſubordinate movement is converted into the predominant, and gives force to it, though of a different, and even ſometimes though of a contrary nature.

Novelty naturally rouſes the mind, and attracts our attention; and the movements, which it cauſes, are always converted into any paſſion belonging to the object, and join their force to it. Whether an event excite joy or ſorrow, pride or ſhame, anger or good-will, it is ſure to produce a ſtronger affection, when new or unuſual. And though novelty of itſelf be agreeable, it fortifies the painful, as well as agreeable paſſions.

Had you any intention to move a perſon extremely by the narration of any event, the beſt method of increaſing its effect would be artfully to delay informing him of it, and firſt to excite his curioſity and impatience before you let him into the ſecret. This is the artifice practiſed by Iago in the famous ſcene of Shakſpeare; and every Spectator is ſenſible, that Othello's jealouſy acquires additional force from his preceding impatience, and that the ſubordinate paſſion is here readily transformed into the predominant one.

Difficulties increaſe paſſions of every kind; and by rouſing our attention, and exciting our active powers, they produce an emotion which nourihes the prevailing affection.

Parents commonly love that child moſt, whoſe ſickly infirm frame of body has occaſioned them the greateſt pains, trouble, and anxiety in rearing him. The agreeable ſentiment of affection here acquires force from ſentiments of uneaſineſs.

Nothing endears ſo much a friend as ſorrow for his death. The pleaſure of his company has not ſo powerful an influence.

Jealouſy is a painful paſſion: yet without ſome ſhare of it, the agreeable affection of love has difficulty to ſubſiſt in its full force and violence. Abſence is alſo a great ſource of complaint among lovers, and gives them the greateſt uneaſineſs: Yet nothing is more favorable to their mutual paſſion than ſhort intervals of that kind: And if long intervals often prove fatal, it is only becauſe, through time, men are accuſtomed to them, and they ceaſe to give uneaſineſs. Jealouſy and abſence in love compoſe the *dolce peccante* of the Italians, which they ſuppoſe ſo eſſential to all pleaſure.

There is a fine obſervation of the elder Pliny, which illuſtrates the principle here inſiſted on. *It is very remarkable*, ſays he, *that the laſt works of celebrated artiſts, which they left imperfect, are always the moſt prized, ſuch as the* Iris *of* Ariſtides, *the* Tyndarides *of* Nicomachus, *the* Medea *of* Timomachus, *and the* Venus *of* Apelles. *Theſe are valued even above their finiſhed productions: The broken lineaments of the piece, and the half-formed idea of the painter are carefully ſtudied; and our very grief for that curious hand, which had*

been ſtopped by death, is an additional increaſe to our pleaſure [1].

Theſe inſtances (and many more might be collected) are ſufficient to afford us ſome inſight into the analogy of nature, and to ſhow us, that the pleaſure which poets, orators, and muſicians give us by exciting grief, ſorrow, indignation, compaſſion, is not ſo extraordinary or paradoxical as it may at firſt ſight appear. The force of imagination, the energy of expreſſion, the power of numbers, the charms of imitation; all theſe are naturally, of themſelves, delightful to the mind: and when the object preſented lays alſo hold of ſome affection, the pleaſure ſtill riſes upon us, by the converſion of this ſubordinate movement into that which is predominant. The paſſion, though, perhaps natural, and when excited by the ſimple appearance of a real object, it may be painful; yet is ſo ſmoothed, and ſoftened, and mollified, when raiſed by the finer arts, that it affords the higheſt entertainment.

To confirm this reaſoning, we may obſerve, that if the movements of the imagination be not predominant above thoſe of the paſſion, a contrary effect follows; and the former, being now ſubordinate, is converted into the latter, and ſtill farther increaſes the pain and affliction of the ſufferer.

[1] Illud vero perquam rarum ac memoria dignum, etiam ſuprema opera artificum, imperfectaſque tabulas, ſicut Irin Ariſtidis, Tyndaridas Nicomachi, Medeam Timomachi, & quam diximus Venerem Apellis, in majori admiratione eſſe quam perfecta. Quippe in iis lineamenta reliqua, ipſæque cogitationes artificum ſpectantur, atque in lenocinio commendationis dolor eſt manus, cum id agerent, extinctæ deſiderantur. Lib. xxxv. cap. 40.

Who could ever think of it as a good expedient for comforting an afflicted parent, to exaggerate, with all the force of elocution, the irreparable loſs which he has met with by the death of a favorite child? The more power of imagination and expreſſion you here employ, the more you increaſe his deſpair and affliction.

The ſhame, confuſion, and terror of Verres, no doubt, roſe in proportion to the noble eloquence and vehemence of Cicero: So alſo did his pain and uneaſineſs. Theſe former paſſions were too ſtrong for the pleaſure ariſing from the beauties of elocution; and operated, though from the ſame principle, yet in a contrary manner, to the ſympathy, compaſſion, and indignation of the audience.

Lord Clarendon, when he approaches towards the cataſtrophe of the royal party, ſuppoſes, that his narration muſt then become infinitely diſagreeable; and he hurries over the king's death, without giving us one circumſtance of it. He conſiders it as too horrid a ſcene to be contemplated with any ſatisfaction, or even without the utmoſt pain and averſion. He himſelf, as well as the readers of that age, were too deeply concerned in the events, and felt a pain from ſubjects which a hiſtorian and a reader of another age would regard as the moſt pathetic and moſt intereſting, and, by conſequence, the moſt agreeable.

An action, repreſented in tragedy, may be too bloody and atrocious. It may excite ſuch movements of horror as will not ſoften into pleaſure; and the greateſt energy of expreſſion, beſtowed on

deſcriptions of that nature, ſerves only to augment our uneaſineſs. Such is that action repreſented in the *Ambitious Stepmother*, where a venerable old man, raiſed to the height of fury and deſpair, ruſhes againſt a pillar, and ſtriking his head upon it, beſmears it all over with mingled brains and gore. The Engliſh theatre abounds too much with ſuch ſhocking images.

Even the common ſentiments of compaſſion require to be ſoftened by ſome agreeable affection, in order to give a thorough ſatisfaction to the audience. The mere ſuffering of plaintive virtue, under the triumphant tyranny and oppreſſion of vice, forms a diſagreeable ſpectacle, and is carefully avoided by all maſters of the drama. In order to diſmiſs the audience with entire ſatisfaction and contentment, the virtue muſt either convert itſelf into a noble courageous deſpair, or the vice receive its proper puniſhment.

Moſt painters appear in this light to have been very unhappy in their ſubjects. As they wrought much for churches and convents, they have chiefly repreſented ſuch horrible ſubjects as crucifixions and martyrdoms, where nothing appears but tortures, wounds, executions, and paſſive ſuffering, without any action or affection. When they turned their pencil from this ghaſtly mythology, they had commonly recourſe to Ovid, whoſe fictions, though paſſionate and agreeable, are ſcarcely natural or probable enough for painting.

The ſame inverſion of that principle, which is here inſiſted on, diſplays itſelf in common life, as

in the effects of oratory and poetry. Raiſe ſo the ſubordinate paſſion that it becomes the predominant, it ſwallows up that affection which it before nouriſhed and increaſed. Too much jealouſy extinguiſhes love: Too much difficulty renders us indifferent: Too much ſickneſs and infirmity diſguſts a ſelfiſh and unkind parent.

What ſo diſagreeable as the diſmal, gloomy, diſaſtrous ſtories, with which melancholy people entertain their companions? The uneaſy paſſion being there raiſed alone, unaccompanied with any ſpirit, genius, and eloquence, conveys a pure uneaſineſs, and is attended with nothing that can ſoften it into pleaſure or ſatisfaction.

ESSAY XXIII.

OF THE STANDARD OF TASTE.

THE great variety of Taſte, as well as of opinion, which prevails in the world, is too obvious not to have fallen under every one's obſervation. Men of the moſt confined knowledge are able to remark a difference of taſte in the narrow circle of their acquaintance, even where the perſons have been educated under the ſame government, and have early imbibed the ſame prejudices: But thoſe who can enlarge their view to contemplate diſtant nations and remote ages, are ſtill more ſurpriſed at the great inconſiſtence and contrariety. We are apt to call *barbarous* whatever departs widely from our taſte and apprehenſion; But ſoon find the

epithet of reproach retorted on us. And the higheſt arrogance and ſelf-conceit is at laſt ſtartled, on obſerving an equal aſſurance on all ſides, and ſcruples amidſt ſuch a conteſt of ſentiment, to pronounce poſitively in its own favor.

As this variety of taſte is obvious to the moſt careleſs inquirer; ſo it will be found, on examination, to be ſtill greater in reality than in appearance. The ſentiments of men often differ with regard to beauty and deformity of all kinds, even while their general diſcourſe is the ſame. There are certain terms in every language which import blame, and others praiſe; and all men who uſe the ſame tongue muſt agree in their application of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, ſimplicity, ſpirit in writing; and in blaming fuſtian, affectation, coldneſs, and a falſe brilliancy: But when critics come to particulars, this ſeeming unanimity vaniſhes; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expreſſions. In all matters of opinion and ſcience, the caſe is oppoſite: The difference among men is there oftener found to lie in generals than in particulars; and to be leſs in reality than in appearance. An explanation of the terms commonly ends the controverſy; and the diſputants are ſurpriſed to find, that they had been quarrelling, while at bottom they agreed in their judgment.

Thoſe who found morality on ſentiment more than on reaſon, are inclined to comprehend ethics under the former obſervation, and to maintain,

that, in all queſtions which regard conduct and manners, the difference among men is really greater than at firſt ſight it appears. It is indeed obvious, that writers of all nations and all ages concur in applauding juſtice, humanity, magnanimity, prudence, veracity; and in blaming the oppoſite qualities. Even poets and other authors, whoſe compoſitions are chiefly calculated to pleaſe the imagination, are yet found, from Homer down to Fenelon, to inculcate the ſame moral precepts, and to beſtow their applauſe and blame on the ſame virtues and vices. This great unanimity is uſually aſcribed to the influence of plain reaſon; which, in all theſe caſes, maintains ſimilar ſentiments in all men, and prevents thoſe controverſies to which the abſtract ſciences are ſo much expoſed. So far as the unanimity is real, this account may be admitted as ſatisfactory; but we muſt alſo allow, that ſome part of the ſeeming harmony in morals may be accounted for from the very nature of language. The word *virtue*, with its equivalent in every tongue, implies praiſe; as that of *vice*, does blame: And no one, without the moſt obvious and groſſeſt impropriety, could affix a reproach to a term, which in general acceptation is underſtood in a good ſenſe; or beſtow applauſe, where the idiom requires diſapprobation. Homer's general precepts, where he delivers any ſuch, will never be controverted; but it is obvious, that, when he draws particular pictures of manners, and repreſents heroiſm in Achilles and prudence in Ulyſſes, he

intermixes a much greater degree of ferocity in the former, and of cunning and fraud in the latter, than Fenelon would admit of. The ſage Ulyſſes in the Greek poet ſeems to delight in lies and fictions, and often employs them without any neceſſity or even advantage; but his more ſcrupulous ſon, in the French epic writer, expoſes himſelf to the moſt imminent perils, rather than depart from the moſt exact line of truth and veracity.

The admirers and followers of the Alcoran inſiſt on the excellent moral precepts interſperſed throughout that wild and abſurd performance. But it is to be ſuppoſed, that the Arabic words, which correſpond to the Engliſh, equity, juſtice, temperance, meekneſs, charity, were ſuch as, from the conſtant uſe of that tongue, muſt always be taken in a good ſenſe; and it would have argued the greateſt ignorance, not of morals, but of language, to have mentioned them with any epithets, beſides thoſe of applauſe and approbation. But would we know, whether the pretended prophet had really attained a juſt ſentiment of morals? Let us attend to his narration; and we ſhall ſoon find, that he beſtows praiſe on ſuch inſtances of treachery, inhumanity, cruelty, revenge, bigotry, as are utterly incompatible with civilized ſociety. No ſteady rule of right ſeems there to be attended to; and every action is blamed or praiſed, ſo far only as it is beneficial or hurtful to the true believers.

The merit of delivering true general precepts in ethics is indeed very ſmall. Whoever recommends

any moral virtues, really does no more than is implied in the terms themſelves. That people who invented the word *charity*, and uſed it in a good ſenſe, inculcated more clearly and much more efficaciouſly, the precept, *be charitable*, than any pretended legiſlator or prophet, who ſhould inſert ſuch a *maxim* in his writings. Of all expreſſions, thoſe which, together with their other meaning, imply a degree either of blame or approbation, are the leaſt liable to be perverted or miſtaken.

It is natural for us to ſeek a *Standard of Taſte*; a rule by which the various ſentiments of men may be reconciled; at leaſt, a deciſion afforded, confirming one ſentiment, and condemning another.

There is a ſpecies of philoſophy, which cuts off all hopes of ſucceſs in ſuch an attempt, and repreſents the impoſſibility of ever attaining any ſtandard of taſte. The difference, it is ſaid, is very wide between judgment and ſentiment. All ſentiment is right; becauſe ſentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itſelf, and is always real, wherever a man is conſcious of it. But all determinations of the underſtanding are not right; becauſe they have a reference to ſomething beyond themſelves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that ſtandard. Among a thouſand different opinions which different men may entertain of the ſame ſubject, there is one, and but one, that is juſt and true; and the only difficulty is to fix and aſcertain it. On the contrary,

a thouſand different ſentiments, excited by the ſame object, are all right; becauſe no ſentiment repreſents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind; and if that conformity did not really exiſt, the ſentiment could never poſſibly have being. Beauty is no quality in things themſelves: It exiſts merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One perſon may even perceive deformity, where another is ſenſible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquieſce in his own ſentiment, without pretending to regulate thoſe of others. To ſeek the real beauty, or real deformity, is as fruitleſs an inquiry as to pretend to aſcertain the real ſweet or real bitter. According to the diſpoſition of the organs, the ſame object may be both ſweet and bitter; and the proverb has juſtly determined it to be fruitleſs to diſpute concerning taſtes. It is very natural, and even quite neceſſary, to extend this axiom to mental, as well as bodily taſte; and thus common ſenſe, which is ſo often at variance with philoſophy, eſpecially with the ſceptical kind, is found, in one inſtance at leaſt, to agree in pronouncing the ſame deciſion.

But though this axiom, by paſſing into a proverb, ſeems to have attained the ſanction of common ſenſe; there is certainly a ſpecies of common ſenſe which oppoſes it, at leaſt ſerves to modify and reſtrain it. Whoever would aſſert an equality of genius and elegance between Ogilby and Milton,

or Bunyan and Addiſon, would be thought to defend no leſs an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as Teneriffe, or a pond as extenſive as the ocean. Though there may be found perſons who give the preference to the former authors, no one pays attention to ſuch a taſte; and we pronounce without ſcruple, the ſentiment of theſe pretended critics to be abſurd and ridiculous. The principle of the natural equality of taſtes is then totally forgot, and while we admit it on ſome occaſions, where the objects ſeem near an equality, it appears an extravagant paradox, or rather a palpable abſurdity, where objects ſo diſproportioned are compared together.

It is evident that none of the rules of compoſition are fixed by reaſonings *a priori*, or can be eſteemed abſtract concluſions of the underſtanding, from comparing thoſe habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the ſame with that of all the practical ſciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general obſervations, concerning what has been univerſally found to pleaſe in all countries and in all ages. Many of the beauties of poetry, and even of eloquence, are founded on falſhood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuſe or perverſion of terms from their natural meaning. To check the ſallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expreſſion to geometrical truth and exactneſs, would be the moſt contrary to the laws of criticiſm; becauſe it would produce a work, which, by univerſal experience, has been found the moſt

inſipid and diſagreeable: But though poetry can never ſubmit to exact truth, it muſt be confined by rules of art, diſcovered to the author either by genius or obſervation. If ſome negligent or irregular writers have pleaſed, they have not pleaſed by their tranſgreſſions of rule or order; but in ſpite of theſe tranſgreſſions, they have poſſeſſed other beauties, which were conformable to juſt criticiſm; and the force of theſe beauties has been able to overpower cenſure, and give the mind a ſatisfaction ſuperior to the diſguſt ariſing from the blemiſhes. Arioſto pleaſes; but not by his monſtrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the ſerious and comic ſtyles, by the want of coherence in his ſtories, or by the continual interruptions of his narration. He charms by the force and clearneſs of his expreſſions, by the readineſs and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the paſſions, eſpecially thoſe of the gay and amorous kind: And however his faults may diminiſh our ſatisfaction, they are not able entirely to deſtroy it. Did our pleaſure really ariſe from thoſe parts of his poem which we denominate faults, this would be no objection to criticiſm in general: It would only be an objection to thoſe particular rules of criticiſm, which would eſtabliſh ſuch circumſtances to be faults, and would repreſent them as univerſally blameable. If they are found to pleaſe, they cannot be faults, let the pleaſure which they produce be ever ſo unexpected and unaccountable.

But though all the general rules of art are founded only on experience, and on the obſervation of the common ſentiments of human nature, we muſt not imagine that, on every occaſion, the feelings of men will be conformable to theſe rules. Thoſe finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favorable circumſtances to make them play with facility and exactneſs, according to their general and eſtabliſhed principles. The leaſt exterior hinderance to ſuch ſmall ſprings, or the leaſt internal diſorder, diſturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we muſt chuſe with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a ſuitable ſituation and diſpoſition. A perfect ſerenity of mind, recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of theſe circumſtances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we ſhall be unable to judge of the catholic and univerſal beauty. The relation which nature has placed between the form and the ſentiment, will at leaſt be more obſcure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and diſcern it. We ſhall be able to aſcertain its influence, not ſo much from the operation of each particular beauty, as from the durable admiration, which attends thoſe works, that have ſurvived all the caprices of mode and faſhion, all the miſtakes of ignorance and envy.

The ſame Homer who pleaſed at Athens and Rome two thouſand years ago, is ſtill admired at Paris and at London. All the changes of climate, government, religion, and language, have not been able to obſcure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compoſitions are examined by poſterity or by foreigners, the enchantment is diſſipated, and his faults appear in their true colors. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are ſpread, the more ſincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealouſy have too much place in a narrow circle; and even familiar acquaintance with his perſon may diminiſh the applauſe due to his performances: but when theſe obſtructions are removed, the beauties which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable ſentiments, immediately diſplay their energy; and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men.

It appears then, that, amidſt all the variety and caprice of taſte, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whoſe influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original ſtructure of the internal fabric, are calculated to pleaſe, and others to diſpleaſe; and if they fail of their effect in any particular inſtance, it is from ſome apparent defect or imperfection in the organ. A man in a fever would not inſiſt on his

palate as able to decide concerning flavors; nor would one affected with the jaundice pretend to give a verdict with regard to colors. In each creature, there is a ſound and a defective ſtate; and the former alone can be ſuppoſed to afford us a true ſtandard of taſte and ſentiment. If, in the ſound ſtate of the organ, there be an entire or a conſiderable uniformity of ſentiment among men, we may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in day-light, to the eye of a man in health, is denominated their true and real color, even while color is allowed to be merely a phantaſm of the ſenſes.

Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of thoſe general principles, on which depends our ſentiment of beauty or deformity. Though ſome objects, by the ſtructure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleaſure, it is not to be expected, that in every individual the pleaſure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and ſituations occur, which either throw a falſe light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper ſentiment and perception.

One obvious cauſe, why many feel not the proper ſentiment of beauty, is the want of that *delicacy* of imagination, which is requiſite to convey a ſenſibility of thoſe finer emotions. This delicacy every one pretends to: Every one talks of it, and would reduce every kind of taſte or ſentiment

to its ſtandard. But as our intention in this eſſay is to mingle ſome light of the underſtanding with the feelings of ſentiment, it will be proper to give a more accurate definition of delicacy than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philoſophy from too profound a ſource, we ſhall have recourſe to a noted ſtory in Don Quixote.

It is with good reaſon, ſays Sancho to the ſquire with the great noſe, that I pretend to have a judgement in wine: This is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinſmen were once called to give their opinion of a hogſhead, which was ſuppoſed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them taſtes it; conſiders it; and after mature reflection pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a ſmall taſte of leather which he perceived in it. The other, after uſing the ſame precautions, gives alſo his verdict in favor of the wine; but with the reſerve of a taſte of iron, which he could eaſily diſtinguiſh. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogſhead, there was found at the bottom an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.

The great reſemblance between mental and bodily taſte will eaſily teach us to apply this ſtory. Though it be certain, that beauty and deformity, more than ſweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong entirely to the ſentiment, internal or external; it muſt be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects which are fitted by nature to produce

thoſe particular feelings. Now as theſe qualities may be found in a ſmall degree, or may be mixed and confounded with each other, it often happens, that the taſte is not affected with ſuch minute qualities, or is not able to diſtinguiſh all the particular flavors, amidſt the diſorder in which they are preſented. Where the organs are ſo fine as to allow nothing to eſcape them, and at the ſame time ſo exact as to perceive every ingredient in the compoſition; this we call delicacy of taſte, whether we employ theſe terms in the literal or metaphorical ſenſe. Here then the general rules of beauty are of uſe; being drawn from eſtabliſhed models, and from the obſervation of what pleaſes or diſpleaſes, when preſented ſingly and in a high degree: And if the ſame qualities, in a continued compoſition and in a ſmaller degree, affect not the organs with a ſenſible delight or uneaſineſs, we exclude the perſon from all pretenſions to this delicacy. To produce theſe general rules or avowed patterns of compoſition, is like finding the key with the leathern thong; which juſtified the verdict of Sancho's kinſmen, and confounded thoſe pretended judges who had condemned them. Though the hogſhead had never been emptied, the taſte of the one was ſtill equally delicate, and that of the other equally dull and languid: But it would have been more difficult to have proved the ſuperiority of the former, to the conviction of every by-ſtander. In like manner, though the beauties of writing had never been methodized, or reduced to general principles; though no excellent models

had ever been acknowledged; the different degrees of taſte would ſtill have ſubſiſted, and the judgement of one man been preferable to that of another: but it would not have been ſo eaſy to ſilence the bad critic, who might always inſiſt upon his particular ſentiment, and refuſe to ſubmit to his antagoniſt. But when we ſhow him an avowed principle of art; when we illuſtrate this principle by examples, whoſe operation, from his own particular taſte, he acknowledges to be conformable to the principle; when we prove, that the ſame principle may be applied to the preſent caſe, where he did not perceive or feel its influence: he muſt conclude, upon the whole, that the fault lies in himſelf, and that he wants the delicacy which is requiſite to make him ſenſible of every beauty and every blemiſh, in any compoſition or diſcourſe.

It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every ſenſe or faculty, to perceive with exactneſs its moſt minute objects, and allow nothing to eſcape its notice and obſervation. The ſmaller the objects are, which become ſenſible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and compoſition. A good palate is not tried by ſtrong flavors; but by a mixture of ſmall ingredients, where we are ſtill ſenſible of each part, notwithſtanding its minuteneſs and its confuſion with the reſt. In like manner a quick and acute perception of beauty and deformity muſt be the perfection of our mental taſte; nor can a man be ſatisfied with himſelf while he ſuſpects, that any excellence or blemiſh in a diſcourſe has paſſed him unobſerved.

In this caſe, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the ſenſe or feeling, are found to be united. A very delicate palate, on many occaſions, may be a great inconvenience both to a man, himſelf, and to his friends: But a delicate taſte of wit or beauty muſt always be a deſirable quality; becauſe it is the ſource of all the fineſt and moſt innocent enjoyments of which human nature is ſuſceptible. In this deciſion the ſentiments of all mankind are agreed. Wherever you can aſcertain a delicacy of taſte, it is ſure to meet with approbation; and the beſt way of aſcertaining it is to appeal to thoſe models and principles which have been eſtabliſhed by the uniform conſent and experience of nations and ages.

But though there be naturally a wide difference in point of delicacy between one perſon and another, nothing tends further to increaſe and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent ſurvey or contemplation of a particular ſpecies of beauty. When objects of any kind are firſt preſented to the eye or imagination, the ſentiment which attends them is obſcure and confuſed; and the mind is, in a great meaſure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taſte cannot perceive the ſeveral excellencies of the performance; much leſs diſtinguiſh the particular character of each excellency, and aſcertain its quality and degree. If it pronounce the whole in general to be beautiful or deformed, it is the utmoſt that can be expected; and even this judgment, a perſon, ſo unpractiſed, will be apt to

deliver with great heſitation and reſerve. But allow him to acquire experience in thoſe objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice: He not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the diſtinguiſhing ſpecies of each quality, and aſſigns its ſuitable praiſe or blame. A clear and diſtinct ſentiment attends him through the whole ſurvey of the objects; and he diſcerns that very degree and kind of approbation or diſpleaſure, which each part is naturally fitted to produce. The miſt diſſipates, which ſeemed formerly to hang over the object: The organ acquires greater perfection in its operations; and can pronounce, without danger of miſtake, concerning the merits of every performance. In a word, the ſame addreſs and dexterity, which practice gives to the execution of any work, is alſo acquired by the ſame means in the judging of it.

So advantageous is practice to the diſcernment of beauty, that, before we can give judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requiſite, that that very individual performance be more than once peruſed by us, and be ſurveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation. There is a flutter or hurry of thought which attends the firſt peruſal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine ſentiment of beauty. The relation of the parts is not diſcerned: The true characters of ſtyle are little diſtinguiſhed: The ſeveral perfections and defects ſeem wrapped up in a ſpecies of confuſion, and preſent themſelves indiſtinctly to the imagination. Not to mention, that there is a

ſpecies of beauty, which as it is florid and ſuperficial, pleaſes at firſt; but being found incompatible with a juſt expreſſion either of reaſon or paſſion, ſoon palls upon the taſte, and is then rejected with diſdain, at leaſt rated at a much lower value.

It is impoſſible to continue in the practice of contemplating any order of beauty, without being frequently obliged to form *compariſons* between the ſeveral ſpecies and degrees of excellence, and eſtimating their proportion to each other. A man who has had no opportunity of comparing the different kinds of beauty, is indeed totally unqualified to pronounce an opinion with regard to any object preſented to him. By compariſon alone we fix the epithets of praiſe or blame, and learn how to aſſign the due degree of each. The coarſeſt daubing contains a certain luſtre of colors and exactneſs of imitation, which are ſo far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peaſant or Indian with the higheſt admiration. The moſt vulgar ballads are not entirely deſtitute of harmony or nature; and none but a perſon, familiarized to ſuperior beauties, would pronounce their numbers harſh, or narration unintereſting. A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a perſon converſant in the higheſt excellence of the kind, and is for that reaſon pronounced a deformity: As the moſt finiſhed object, with which we are acquainted, is naturally ſuppoſed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the higheſt applauſe. One accuſtomed to ſee, and examine, and weigh the ſeveral performances, admired in different ages and nations, can alone rate the merits

of a work exhibited to his view, and aſſign its proper rank among the productions of genius.

But to enable a critic the more fully to execute this undertaking, he muſt preſerve his mind free from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his conſideration, but the very object which is ſubmitted to his examination. We may obſerve, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, muſt be ſurveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully reliſhed by perſons, whoſe ſituation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addreſſes himſelf to a particular audience, and muſt have a regard to their particular genius, intereſts, opinions, paſſions, and prejudices; otherwiſe he hopes in vain to govern their reſolutions, and inflame their affections. Should they even have entertained ſome prepoſſeſſions againſt him, however unreaſonable, he muſt not overlook this diſadvantage; but, before he enters upon the ſubject, muſt endeavour to conciliate their affection, and acquire their good graces. A critic of a different age or nation, who ſhould peruſe this diſcourſe, muſt have all theſe circumſtances in his eye, and muſt place himſelf in the ſame ſituation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration. In like manner, when any work is addreſſed to the public, though I ſhould have a friendſhip or enmity with the author, I muſt depart from this ſituation; and conſidering myſelf as a man in general, forget, if poſſible, my individual being and my peculiar circumſtances. A perſon influenced by

prejudice, complies not with this condition; but obſtinately maintains his natural poſition, without placing himſelf in that point of view which the performance ſuppoſes. If the work be addreſſed to perſons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and prejudices; but, full of the manners of his own age and country, raſhly condemns what ſeemed admirable in the eyes of thoſe for whom alone the diſcourſe was calculated. If the work be executed for the public, he never ſufficiently enlarges his comprehenſion, or forgets his intereſt as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means his ſentiments are perverted; nor have the ſame beauties and blemiſhes the ſame influence upon him, as if he had impoſed a proper violence on his imagination, and had forgotten himſelf for a moment. So far his taſte evidently departs from the true ſtandard; and of conſequence loſes all credit and authority.

It is well known, that in all queſtions ſubmitted to the underſtanding, prejudice is deſtructive of ſound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no leſs contrary to good taſte; nor has it leſs influence to corrupt our ſentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good ſenſe* to check its influence in both caſes; and in this reſpect, as well as in many others, reaſon, if not an eſſential part of taſte, is at leaſt requiſite to the operations of this latter faculty. In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correſpondence of parts; nor can either the beauties

or blemiſhes be perceived by him, whoſe thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all thoſe parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the conſiſtence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has alſo a certain end or purpoſe for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or leſs perfect, as it is more or leſs fitted to attain this end. The object of eloquence is to perſuade, of hiſtory to inſtruct, of poetry to pleaſe, by means of the paſſions and the imagination. Theſe ends we muſt carry conſtantly in our view, when we peruſe any performance; and we muſt be able to judge how far the means employed are adapted to their reſpective purpoſes. Beſides every kind of compoſition, even the moſt poetical, is nothing but a chain of propoſitions and reaſonings; not always, indeed, the juſteſt and moſt exact, but ſtill plauſible and ſpecious, however diſguiſed by the coloring of the imagination. The perſons introduced in tragedy and epic poetry, muſt be repreſented as reaſoning, and thinking, and concluding, and acting, ſuitably to their character and circumſtances; and without judgment, as well as taſte and invention, a poet can never hope to ſucceed in ſo delicate an undertaking. Not to mention, that the ſame excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reaſon, the ſame clearneſs of conception, the ſame exactneſs of diſtinction, the ſame vivacity of apprehenſion, are eſſential to the operations of true taſte, and are its infallible concomitants. It ſeldom or never happens, that a man of ſenſe, who

has any experience in art, cannot judge of its beauty; and it is no leſs rare to meet with a man who has a juſt taſte without a ſound underſtanding.

Thus, though the principles of taſte be univerſal, and nearly, if not entirely, the ſame in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or eſtabliſh their own ſentiment as the ſtandard of beauty. The organs of internal ſenſation are ſeldom ſo perfect as to allow the general principles their full play, and produce a feeling correſpondent to thoſe principles. They either labor under ſome defect, or are vitiated by ſome diſorder; and by that means, excite a ſentiment which may be pronounced erroneous. When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any diſtinction, and is only affected by the groſſer and more palpable qualities of the object: The finer touches paſs unnoticed and diſregarded. Where he is not aided by practice, his verdict is attended with confuſion and heſitation. Where no compariſon has been employed, the moſt frivolous beauties, ſuch as rather merit the name of defects, are the object of his admiration. When he lies under the influence of prejudice, all his natural ſentiments are perverted. Where good ſenſe is wanting, he is not qualified to diſcern the beauties of deſign and reaſoning, which are the higheſt and moſt excellent. Under ſome or other of theſe imperfections, the generality of men labor; and hence a true judge in the finer arts is obſerved, even during the moſt poliſhed ages, to be ſo rare a character: Strong ſenſe, united to delicate ſentiment,

improved by practice, perfected by compariſon, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of ſuch, wherever they are to be found, is the true ſtandard of taſte and beauty.

But where are ſuch critics to be found? By what marks are they to be known? How diſtinguiſh them from pretenders? theſe queſtions are embarraſſing, and ſeem to throw us back into the ſame uncertainty, from which, during the courſe of this eſſay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourſelves.

But if we conſider the matter aright, theſe are queſtions of fact, not of ſentiment. Whether any particular perſon be endowed with good ſenſe and a delicate imagination, free from prejudice, may often be the ſubject of diſpute, and be liable to great diſcuſſion and inquiry; but that ſuch a character is valuable and eſtimable will be agreed in by all mankind. Where theſe doubts occur, men can do no more than in other diſputable queſtions, which are ſubmitted to the underſtanding: They muſt produce the beſt arguments that their invention ſuggeſts to them; they muſt acknowledge a true and deciſive ſtandard to exiſt ſomewhere, to wit, real exiſtence and matter of fact; and they muſt have indulgence to ſuch as differ from them in their appeals to this ſtandard. It is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, if we have proved, that the taſte of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that ſome men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged

by univerſal ſentiment to have a preference above others.

But in reality the difficulty of finding, even in particulars, the ſtandard of taſte, is not ſo great as it is repreſented. Though in ſpeculation we may readily avow a certain criterion in ſcience, and deny it in ſentiment, the matter is found in practice to be much more hard to aſcertain in the former caſe than in the latter. Theories of abſtract philoſophy, ſyſtems of profound theology, have prevailed during one age: In a ſucceſſive period theſe have been univerſally exploded; their abſurdity has been detected; other theories and ſyſtems have ſupplied their place, which again gave place to their ſucceſſors; and nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of chance and faſhion than theſe pretended deciſions of ſcience. The caſe is not the ſame with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Juſt expreſſions of paſſion and nature are ſure, after a little time, to gain public applauſe, which they maintain for ever. Ariſtotle, and Plato, and Epicurus, and Deſcartes, may ſucceſſively yield to each other: But Terence and Virgil maintain an univerſal, undiſputed empire over the minds of men. The abſtract philoſophy of Cicero has loſt its credit: The vehemence of his oratory is ſtill the object of our admiration.

Though men of delicate taſte be rare, they are eaſily to be diſtinguiſhed in ſociety by the ſoundneſs of their underſtanding, and the ſuperiority of their faculties above the reſt of mankind. The

aſcendant which they acquire, gives a prevalence to that lively approbation, with which they receive any productions of genius, and renders it generally predominant. Many men, when left to themſelves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of reliſhing any fine ſtroke which is pointed out to them. Every convert to the admiration of the real poet or orator is the cauſe of ſome new converſion. And though prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at laſt to the force of nature and juſt ſentiment. Thus, though a civilized nation may eaſily be miſtaken in the choice of their admired philoſopher, they never have been found long to err in their affection for a favorite epic or tragic author.

But notwithſtanding all our endeavours to fix a ſtandard of taſte, and reconcile the diſcordant apprehenſions of men, there ſtill remain two ſources of variation, which are not ſufficient indeed to confound all the boundaries of beauty and deformity, but will often ſerve to produce a difference in the degrees of our approbation or blame. The one is the different humors of particular men; the other, the particular manners and opinions of our age and country. The general principles of taſte are uniform in human nature: Where men vary in their judgments, ſome defect or perverſion in the faculties may commonly be remarked, proceeding either from prejudice, from want of practice, or want of delicacy; and there is juſt reaſon

for approving one taſte and condemning another; But where there is ſuch a diverſity in the internal frame or external ſituation as is entirely blameleſs on both ſides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other; in that caſe, a certain degree of diverſity in judgment is unavoidable, and we ſeek in vain for a ſtandard, by which we can reconcile the contrary ſentiments.

A young man, whoſe paſſions are warm, will be more ſenſibly touched with amorous and tender images than a man more advanced in years, who takes pleaſure in wiſe, philoſophical reflections concerning the conduct of life and moderation of the paſſions. At twenty, Ovid may be the favorite author; Horace at forty: and perhaps Tacitus at fifty. Vainly would we, in ſuch caſes, endeavour to enter into the ſentiments of others, and diveſt ourſelves of thoſe propenſities which are natural to us. We chuſe our favorite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humor and diſpoſition. Mirth or paſſion, ſentiment or reflection; which-ever of theſe moſt predominates in our temper, it gives us a peculiar ſympathy with the writer who reſembles us.

One perſon is more pleaſed with the ſublime; another, with the tender; a third, with raillery. One has a ſtrong ſenſibility to blemiſhes, and is extremely ſtudious of correctneſs: Another has a more lively feeling of beauties, and pardons twenty abſurdities and defects for one elevated or pathetic ſtroke. The ear of this man is entirely turned towards conciſeneſs and energy; that man is delighted

with a copious, rich, and harmonious expreſſion. Simplicity is affected by one; ornament, by another. Comedy, tragedy, ſatire, odes, have each its partiſans, who prefer that particular ſpecies of writing to all others. It is plainly an error in a critic to confine his approbation to one ſpecies or ſtyle of writing, and condemn all the reſt. But it is almoſt impoſſible not to feel a predilection for that which ſuits our particular turn and diſpoſition. Such preferences are innocent and unavoidable, and can never reaſonably be the object of diſpute, becauſe there is no ſtandard by which they can be decided.

For a like reaſon, we are more pleaſed in the courſe of our reading, with pictures and characters that reſemble objects which are found in our own age or country, than with thoſe which deſcribe a different ſet of cuſtoms. It is not without ſome effort, that we reconcile ourſelves to the ſimplicity of ancient manners, and behold princeſſes carrying water from the ſpring, and kings and heroes dreſſing their own victuals. We may allow in general, that the repreſentation of ſuch manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece; but we are not ſo ſenſibly touched with them. For this reaſon, comedy is not eaſily transferred from one age or nation to another. A Frenchman or Engliſhman is not pleaſed with the Andria of Terence, or Clitia of Machiavel; where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the ſpectators, but is always kept behind the ſcenes, ſuitably to the reſerved

humor of the ancient Greeks and Italians. A man of learning and reflection can make allowance for theſe peculiarities of manners; but a common audience can never diveſt themſelves ſo far of their uſual ideas and ſentiments, as to reliſh pictures which nowiſe reſemble them.

But here there occurs a reflection, which may, perhaps, be uſeful in examining the celebrated controverſy concerning ancient and modern learning; where we often find the one ſide excuſing any ſeeming abſurdity in the ancients from the manners of the age, and the other refuſing to admit this excuſe, or at leaſt admitting it only as an apology for the author, not for the performance. In my opinion, the proper boundaries in this ſubject have ſeldom been fixed between the contending parties. Where any innocent peculiarities of manners are repreſented, ſuch as thoſe above mentioned, they ought certainly to be admitted; and a man who is ſhocked with them, gives an evident proof of falſe delicacy and refinement. The poet's *monument more durable than braſs*, muſt fall to the ground like common brick or clay, were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and cuſtoms, and would admit of nothing but what was ſuitable to the prevailing faſhion. Muſt we throw aſide the pictures of our anceſtors, becauſe of their ruffs and fardingales? But where the ideas of morality and decency alter from one age to another, and where vicious manners are deſcribed, without being marked with the

the proper characters of blame and disapprobation; this must be allowed to disfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity. I cannot, nor is it proper I should, enter into such sentiments; and however I may excuse the poet, on account of the manners of his age, I never can relish the composition. The want of humanity and of decency, so conspicuous in the characters drawn by several of the ancient poets, even sometimes by Homer and the Greek tragedians, diminishes considerably the merit of their noble performances, and gives modern authors an advantage over them. We are not interested in the fortunes and sentiments of such rough heroes: We are displeased to find the limits of vice and virtue so much confounded: and whatever indulgence we may give to the writer on account of his prejudices, we cannot prevail on ourselves to enter into his sentiments, to bear an affection to characters which we plainly discover to be blameable.

The case is not the same with moral principles, as with speculative opinions of any kind. These are in continual flux and revolution. The son embraces a different system from the father: Nay, there scarcely is any man who can boast of great constancy and uniformity in this particular. Whatever speculative errors may be found in the polite writings of any age or country, they detract but little from the value of those compositions. There needs but a certain turn of thought or imagination to make us enter into all the opinions which then prevailed, and relish the

ſentiments or concluſions derived from them: but a very violent effort is requiſite to change our judgment of manners, and excite ſentiments of approbation or blame, love or hatred, different from thoſe to which the mind from long cuſtom has been familiarized: and where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral ſtandard, by which he judges, he is juſtly jealous of it, and will not pervert the ſentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaiſance to any writer whatſoever.

Of all ſpeculative errors, thoſe which regard religion are the moſt excuſable in compoſitions of genius; nor is it ever permitted to judge of the civility or wiſdom of any people, or even of ſingle perſons, by the groſſneſs or refinement of their theological principles. The ſame good ſenſe that directs men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not hearkened to in religious matters, which are ſuppoſed to be placed altogether above the cognizance of human reaſon. On this account, all the abſurdities of the pagan ſyſtem of theology muſt be overlooked by every critic, who would pretend to form a juſt notion of ancient poetry; and our poſterity, in their turn, muſt have the ſame indulgence to their forefathers. No religious principles can ever be imputed as a fault to any poet, while they remain merely principles, and take not ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of his heart, as to lay him under the imputationo *bigotry* or *ſuperſtition*. Where that happens, they confound the ſentiments of morality,

and alter the natural boundaries of vice and virtue. They are therefore eternal blemiſhes, according to the principle above mentioned; nor are the prejudices and falſe opinions of the age ſufficient to juſtify them.

It is eſſential to the Roman catholic religion to inſpire a violent hatred of every other worſhip, and to repreſent all pagans, mahometans, and heretics, as the objects of divine wrath and vengeance. Such ſentiments, though they are in reality very blameable, are conſidered as virtues by the zealots of that communion, and are repreſented in their tragedies and epic poems as a kind of divine heroiſm. This bigotry has diſfigured two very fine tragedies of the French theatre, Polieucte and Athalia; where an intemperate zeal for particular modes of worſhip is ſet off with all the pomp imaginable, and forms the predominant character of the heroes. "What is "this", ſays the ſublime Joad to Joſabet, finding her in diſcourſe with Mathan the prieſt of Baal, "Does the daughter of David ſpeak to "this traitor? Are you not afraid, leſt the earth "ſhould open and pour forth flames to devour "you both? Or, leſt thoſe holy walls ſhould "fall and cruſh you together? What is his "purpoſe? Why comes that enemy of God "hither to poiſon the air which we breathe with "his horrid preſence?" Such ſentiments are received with great applauſe on the theatre of Paris; but at London the ſpectators would be

full as much pleaſed to hear Achilles tell Agamemnon, that he was a dog in his forehead, and a deer in his heart; or Jupiter threaten Juno with a ſound drubbing if ſhe will not be quiet.

Religious principles are alſo a blemiſh in any polite compoſition, when they riſe up to ſuperſtition, and intrude themſelves into every ſentiment, however remote from any connexion with religion. It is no excuſe for the poet, that the cuſtoms of his country had burdened life with ſo many religious ceremonies and obſervances, that no part of it was exempt from that yoke. It muſt for ever be ridiculous in Petrarch to compare his miſtreſs, Laura, to Jeſus-Chriſt. Nor is it leſs ridiculous in that agreeable libertine, Boccace, very ſeriouſly to give thanks to God Almighty and the ladies, for their aſſiſtance in defending him againſt his enemies.

NOTES

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 19.

I HAVE taken it for granted, according to the ſuppoſition of Machiavel, that the ancient Perſians had no nobility; though there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the Florentine ſecretary, who ſeems to have been better acquainted with the Roman than the Greek authors, was miſtaken in this particular. The more ancient Perſians, whoſe manners are deſcribed by Xenophon, were a free people, and had nobility. Their ομοτιμοι were preſerved even after the extending of their conqueſts and the conſequent change of their government. Arrian mentions them in Darius's time, *De exped.* Alex. lib. ii. Hiſtorians alſo ſpeak often of the perſons in command as men of family. Tygranes, who was general of the Medes under Xerxes, was of the race of Achmænes, Herod. lib. vii. cap. 62. Artachæas, who directed the cutting of the canal about mount Athos, was of the ſame family. Id. cap. 117. Megabyſus was one of the ſeven eminent Perſians who conſpired againſt the Magi. His ſon, Zopyrus, was in the higheſt command under Darius, and delivered Babylon to him. His grand-ſon, Megabyſus, commanded the army defeated at Marathon. His great-grand-ſon, Zopyrus, was alſo eminent, and was baniſhed Perſia. Herod. lib. iii. Thuc. lib. i. Roſaces, who

commanded an army in Egypt under Artaxerxes, was alſo deſcended from one of the ſeven conſpirators, Diod. Sic. lib. xvi. Ageſilaus, in Xenophon, Hiſt. Græc. lib. iv. being deſirous of making a marriage betwixt king Cotys his ally and the daughter of Spithridates, a Perſian of rank, who had deſerted to him, firſt aſks Cotys what family Spithridates is of. One of the moſt conſiderable in Perſia, ſays Cotys. Ariæus, when offered the ſovereignty by Clearchus and the ten thouſand Greeks, refuſed it as of too low a rank, and ſaid, that ſo many eminent Perſians would never endure his rule. *Id. de exped.* lib. ii. Some of the families deſcended from the ſeven Perſians above mentioned remaining during all Alexander's ſucceſſors; and Mithridates, in Antiochus's time, is ſaid by Polybius to be deſcended from one of them, lib. v. cap. 43. Artabaſus was eſteemed, as Arrian ſays, εν τοις πρωτοις Περσων. lib. iii. And when Alexander married in one day 80 of his captains to Perſian women, his intention plainly was to ally the Macedonians with the moſt eminent Perſian families. Id. lib. vii. Diodorus Siculus ſays they were of the moſt noble birth in Perſia, lib. xvii. The government of Perſia was deſpotic, and conducted in many reſpects, after the eaſtern manner, but was not carried ſo far as to extirpate all nobility, and confound all ranks and orders. It left men who were ſtill great, by themſelves and their family, independent of their office and commiſſion. And the reaſon why the Macedonians kept ſo eaſily dominion over them was owing to other cauſes eaſy to be found in the hiſtorians; though it muſt be owned that Machiavel's reaſoning is, in itſelf, juſt, however doubtful its application to the preſent caſe.

NOTE [B], p. 43.

BY that *influence of the crown* which I would juſtify, I mean only that which ariſes from the offices and honors that are at the diſpoſal of the crown. As to private *bribery*, it may be conſidered in the ſame light as the practice of employing ſpies; which is ſcarcely juſtifiable in a good miniſter, and is infamous in a bad one: But to be a ſpy, or to be corrupted, is always infamous under all miniſters, and is to be regarded as a ſhameleſs proſtitution. Polybius juſtly eſteems the pecuniary influence of the ſenate and cenſors to be one of the regular and conſtitutional weights, which perſerved the balance of the Roman government. Lib. vi. cap. 15.

NOTE [C], p. 59.

I SAY, *in part*; for it is a vulgar error to imagine, that the ancients were as great friends to toleration as the Engliſh or Dutch are at preſent. The laws againſt external ſuperſtition, amongſt the Romans, were as ancient as the time of the twelve tables; and the Jews as well as Chriſtians were ſometimes puniſhed by them; though, in general, theſe laws were not rigorouſly executed. Immediately after the conqueſt of Gaul, they forbad all but the natives to be initiated into the religion of the Druids; and this was a kind of perſecution. In about a century after this conqueſt, the emperor Claudius, quite aboliſhed that ſuperſtition by penal laws; which would have been a very grievous perſecution, if the imitation of the Roman manners had not, before-hand, weaned the Gauls from their ancient prejudices. Suetonius *in vita* Claudii. Pliny aſcribes the abolition of the Druidical ſuperſtitions to Tiberius, probably

becauſe that emperor had taken ſome ſteps towards reſtraining them (lib. xxx. cap. i.). This is an inſtance of the uſual caution and moderation of the Romans in ſuch caſes; and very different from their violent and ſanguinary method of treating the *Chriſtians*. Hence we may entertain a ſuſpicion, that thoſe furious perſecutions of *Chriſtianity* were in ſome meaſure owing to the imprudent zeal and bigotry of the firſt propagators of that ſect; and Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory affords us many reaſons to confirm this ſuſpicion.

NOTE [D], p. 106.

THE orators formed the taſte of the Athenian people, not the people of the orators. Gorgias Leontinus was very taking with them, till they became acquainted with a better manner. His figures of ſpeech, ſays Diodorus Siculus, his antitheſis, his ισοκωλες, his ομοιοτελευτον, which are now deſpiſed, had a great effect upon the audience. Lib. xii. page 106. *ex editione* Rhod. It is in vain therefore for modern orators to plead the taſte of their hearers as an apology for their lame performances. It would be ſtrange prejudice in favor of antiquity, not to allow a Britiſh parliament to be naturally ſuperior in judgment and delicacy to an Athenian mob.

NOTE [E], p. 125.

IF it be asked, how we can reconcile to the foregoing principles the happineſs, riches, and good police of the Chineſe, who have always been governed by a monarch, and can ſcarcely form an idea of a free government? I would anſwer, that though the Chineſe government be a pure monarchy, it is not, properly ſpeaking, abſolute. This proceeds from a peculiarity in the ſituation of that country: They have no

neighbours, except the Tartars, from whom they were, in ſome meaſure, ſecured, at leaſt ſeemed to be ſecured, by their famous wall, and by the great ſuperiority of their numbers. By this means, military diſcipline has always been much neglected amongſt them; and their ſtanding forces are mere militia, of the worſt kind; and unfit to ſuppreſs any general inſurrection in countries ſo extremely populous. The ſword, therefore, may properly be ſaid to be always in the hands of the people, which is a ſufficient reſtraint upon the monarch, and obliges him to lay his *mandarins* or governors of provinces under the reſtraint of general laws, in order to prevent thoſe rebellions, which we learn from hiſtory to have been ſo frequent and dangerous in that government. Perhaps, a pure monarchy of this kind, were it fitted for defence againſt foreign enemies, would be the beſt of all govornments, as having both the tranquillity attending kingly power, and the moderation and liberty of popular aſſemblies.

NOTE [F], p. 178.

WERE I not afraid of appearing too philoſophical, I ſhould remind my reader of that famous doctrine, ſuppoſed to be fully proved in modern times, "That taſtes and colors, and all other ſenſible qualities, lie not in the "bodies, but merely in the ſenſes." The caſe is the ſame with beauty and deformity, virtue and vice. This doctrine, however, takes off no more from the reality of the latter qualities than from that of the former; nor need it give any umbrage either to critics or moraliſts. Though colors were allowed to lie only in the eye, would diers or painters ever be leſs regarded or eſteemed? there is a ſufficient uniformity in the ſenſes and feelings of mankind,

to make all theſe qualities the objects of art and reaſoning, and to have the greateſt influence on life and manners. And as it is certain, that the diſcovery above-mentioned in natural philoſophy, makes no alteration on action and conduct; why ſhould a like diſcovery in moral philoſophy make any alteration?

NOTE [G], p. 193.

THE Sceptic, perhaps, carries the matter too far, when he limits all philoſophical topics and reflections to theſe two. There ſeem to be others, whoſe truth is undeniable, and whoſe natural tendency is to tranquillize and ſoften all the paſſions. Philoſophy greedily ſeizes theſe, ſtudies them, weighs them, commits them to the memory, and familiarizes them to the mind: And their influence on tempers, which are thoughtful, gentle, and moderate, may be conſiderable. But what is their influence, you will ſay, if the temper be antecedently diſpoſed after the ſame manner as that to which they pretend to form it? They may, at leaſt, fortify that temper, and furniſh it with views, by which it may entertain and nouriſh itſelf. Here are a few examples of ſuch philoſophical reflections.

1. Is it not certain, that every condition has concealed ills? Then why envy any body?

2. Every one has known ills; and there is a compenſation throughout. Why not be contented with the preſent?

3. Cuſtom deadens the ſenſe both of the good and the ill, and levels every thing.

4. Health and humor all. The reſt of little conſequence, except theſe be affected.

5. How many other good things have I? Then why be vexed for one ill?

6. How many are happy in the condition of which I complain? How many envy me?

7. Every good muſt be paid for: Fortune by labor, favor by flattery. Would I keep the price, yet have the commodity?

8. Expect not too great happineſs in life. Human nature admits it not.

9. Propoſe not a happineſs too complicated. But does that depend on me? Yes: The firſt choice does. Life is like a game: One may chuſe the game: And paſſion, by degrees, ſeizes the proper object.

10. Anticipate by your hopes and fancy future conſolation, which time infallibly brings to every affliction.

11. I deſire to be rich. Why? That I may poſſeſs many fine objects; houſes, gardens, equipage, &c. How many fine objects does nature offer to every one without expenſe? If enjoyed, ſufficient; if not, ſee the effect of cuſtom or of temper, which would ſoon take off the reliſh of the riches.

12. I deſire fame. Let this occur: If I act well, I ſhall have the eſteem of all my acquaintance. And what is all the reſt to me?

Theſe reflections are ſo obvious, that it is a wonder they occur not to every man: So convincing, that it is a wonder, they perſuade not every man. But perhaps they do occur to and perſuade moſt men, when they conſider human life by a general and calm ſurvey: But where any real, affecting incident happens; when paſſion is awakened, fancy agitated, example draws, and council urges; the philoſopher is loſt in the man, and he ſeeks in vain for that perſuaſion which before ſeemed ſo firm and unſhaken. What remedy for this inconvenience? Aſſiſt yourſelf by a frequent

perusal of the entertaining moralists: Have recourse to the learning of Plutarch, the imagination of Lucian, the eloquence of Cicero, the wit of Seneca, the gaiety of Montaigne, the sublimity of Shaftesbury. Moral precepts, so couched, strike deep, and fortify the mind against the illusions of passion. But trust not altogether to external aid: By habit and study acquire that philosophical temper which both gives force to reflection, and by rendering a great part of your happiness independent, takes off the edge from all disorderly passions, and tranquillizes the mind. Despise not these helps; but confide not too much in them neither, unless nature has been favorable in the temper with which she has endowed you.

NOTE [H], p. 217.

IT is a saying of Menander, Κομψος ςρατιωτης, ȣδ αν ει πλαττει θεος Ουδεις γενοιτ αν. Men. apud Stobæum. *It is not in the power of God to make a polite soldier.* The contrary observation with regard to the manners of soldiers takes place in our days. This seems to me a presumption, that the ancients owed all their refinement and civility to books and study; for which, indeed, a soldier's life is not so well calculated. Company and the world is their sphere: And if there be any politeness to be learned from company, they will certainly have a considerable share of it.

NOTE [I], p. 217.

THOUGH all mankind have a strong propensity to religion at certain times and in certain dispositions; yet are there few or none who have it to that degree, and with that constancy, which is requisite to support the character of this profession. It must therefore happen, that clergymen, being

drawn from the common maſs of mankind, as people are to other employments, by the views of profit, the greater part, though no atheiſts or free-thinkers, will find it neceſſary, on particular occaſions, to feign more devotion than they are, at that time, poſſeſſed of, and to maintain the appearance of fervor and ſerioufneſs, even when jaded with the exerciſes of their religion, or when they have their minds engaged in the common occupations of life. They muſt not, like the reſt of the world, give ſcope to their natural movements and ſentiments: They muſt ſet a guard over their looks, and words, and actions: And, in order to ſupport the veneration paid them by the multitude, they muſt not only keep a remarkable reſerve, but muſt promote the ſpirit of ſuperſtition by a continued grimace and hypocriſy. This diſſimulation often deſtroys the candor and ingenuity of their temper, and makes an irreparable breach in their character.

If by chance any of them be poſſeſſed of a temper more ſuſceptible of devotion than uſual, ſo that he has but little occaſion for hypocriſy to ſupport the character of his profeſſion; it is ſo natural for him to over-rate this advantage, and to think that it attones for every violation of morality, that frequently he is not more virtuous than the hypocrite. And though few dare openly avow thoſe exploded opinions, *that every thing is lawful to the ſaints*, and *that they alone have property in their goods*; yet may we obſerve, that theſe principles lurk in every boſom, and repreſent a zeal for religious obſervances as ſo great a merit, that it may compenſate for many vices and enormities. This obſervation is ſo common, that all prudent men are on their guard, when they meet with any extraordinary appearance of religion; though at the ſame time they confeſs, that

there are many exceptions to this general rule, and that probity and ſuperſtition, or even probity and fanaticiſm, are not altogether, and in every inſtance, incompatible.

Moſt men are ambitious; but the ambition of other men may commonly be ſatisfied, by excelling in their particular profeſſion, and thereby promoting the intereſts of ſociety. The ambition of the clergy can often be ſatisfied only by promoting ignorance, and ſuperſtition, and implicit faith, and pious frauds: And having got what Archimedes only wanted (namely, another world, on which he could fix his engines), no wonder they move this world at their pleaſure.

Moſt men have an overweaning conceit of themſelves; but *theſe* have a peculiar temptation to that vice who are regarded with ſuch veneration, and are even deemed ſacred by the ignorant multitude.

Moſt men are apt to bear a particular regard for members of their own profeſſion; but as a lawyer, or phyſician, or merchant, does, each of them, follow out his buſineſs apart, the intereſts of men of theſe profeſſions are not ſo cloſely united as the intereſts of clergymen of the ſame religion; where the whole body gains by the veneration paid to their common tenets, and by the ſuppreſſion of antagoniſts.

Few men can bear contradiction with patience; but the clergy too often proceed even to a degree of fury on this head: Becauſe all their credit and livelihood depend upon the belief which their opinions meet with; and they alone pretend to a divine and ſupernatural authority, or have any color for repreſenting their antagoniſts as impious and prophane. The *Odium Theologicum*, or Theological Hatred, is noted even to a proverb, and means that degree of rancor, which is the moſt furious and implacable.

Revenge is a natural paſſion to mankind; but ſeems to reign with the greateſt force in prieſts and women: Becauſe, being deprived of the immediate exertion of anger, in violence and combat, they are apt to fancy themſelves deſpiſed on that account; and their pride ſupports their vindictive diſpoſition.

Thus many of the vices of human nature are, by fixed moral cauſes, inflamed in that profeſſion; and though ſeveral individuals eſcape the contagion, yet all wiſe governments will be on their guard againſt the attempts of a ſociety, who will for ever combine into one faction, and while it acts as a ſociety, will for ever be actuated by ambition, pride, revenge, and a perſecuting ſpirit.

The temper of religion is grave and ſerious; and this is the character required of prieſts, which confines them to ſtrict rules of decency, and commonly prevents irregularity and intemperance amongſt them. The gaiety, much leſs the exceſſes of pleaſure, is not permitted in that body; and this virtue is, perhaps, the only one which they owe to their profeſſion. In religions, indeed, founded on ſpeculative principles, and where public diſcourſes make a part of religious ſervice, it may alſo be ſuppoſed that the clergy will have a conſiderable ſhare in the learning of the times; though it is certain that their taſte in eloquence will always be greater than their proficiency in reaſoning and philoſophy. But whoever poſſeſſes the other noble virtues of humanity, meekneſs, and moderation, as very many of them no doubt do, is beholden for them to nature or reflection, not to the genius of his calling.

It was no bad expedient in the old Romans, for preventing the ſtrong effect of the prieſtly character, to make it a law, that no one ſhould be received into the ſacerdotal

office, till he was paſt fifty years of age, Dion. Hal. lib. i. The living a layman till that age, it is preſumed, would be able to fix the character.

NOTE [K], p. 218.

CÆSAR (*de Bello* Gallico, lib. i.) ſays, that the Gallic horſes were very good; the German very bad. We find in lib. vii. that he was obliged to mount ſome German cavalry with Gallic horſes. At preſent, no part of Europe has ſo bad horſes of all kinds as France; but Germany abounds with excellent war-horſes. This may beget a little ſuſpicion, that even animals depend not on the climate, but on the different breeds, and on the skill and care in rearing them. The north of England abounds in the beſt horſes of all kinds which are perhaps in the world. In the neighbouring counties, north-ſide of the Tweed, no good horſes of any kind are to be met with. Strabo, lib. ii. rejects, in a great meaſure the influence of climates upon men. All is cuſtom and education, ſays he. It is not from nature, that the Athenians are learned, the Lacedemonians ignorant, and the Thebans too, who are ſtill nearer neighbours to the former. Even the difference of animals, he adds, depends not on climate.

NOTE [L], p. 221.

A Small ſect or ſociety amidſt a greater are commonly moſt regular in their morals; becauſe they are more remarked, and the faults of individuals draw diſhonor on the whole. The only exception to this rule is, when the ſuperſtition and prejudices of the large ſociety are ſo ſtrong as to throw an infamy on the ſmaller ſociety, independent of their morals. For in that caſe, having no character either

either to ſave or gain, they become careleſs of their behaviour, except among themſelves.

NOTE [M], p. 225.

I Am apt to ſuſpect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites. There ſcarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual eminent either in action or ſpeculation. No ingenious manufactures amongſt them, no arts, no ſciences. On the other hand, the moſt rude and barbarous of the whites, ſuch as the ancient Germans, the preſent Tartars, have ſtill ſomething eminent about them, in their valor, form of government, or ſome other particular. Such a uniform and conſtant difference could not happen in ſo many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original diſtinction between theſe breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are Negro-ſlaves diſperſed all over Europe, of whom none ever diſcovered any ſymptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will ſtart up amongſt us, and diſtinguiſh themſelves in every profeſſion. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one negro as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for ſlender accompliſhments, like a parrot who ſpeaks a few words plainly.

NOTE [N], p. 240.

PAinters make no ſcruple of repreſenting diſtreſs and ſorrow as well as any other paſſion: But they ſeem not to dwell ſo much on theſe melancholy affections as the poets, who, though they copy every motion of the human breaſt, yet paſs quickly over the agreeable ſentiments. A painter repreſents only one inſtant; and if that be paſſionate

enough, it is ſure to affect and delight the ſpectator: But nothing can furniſh to the poet a variety of ſcenes and incidents and ſentiments, except diſtreſs, terror, or anxiety. Complete joy and ſatisfaction is attended with ſecurity, and leaves no farther room for action.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.